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WESTERN KENTUCKY

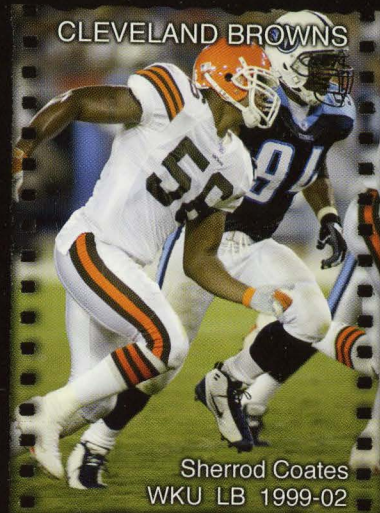


2004
Postseason
Update



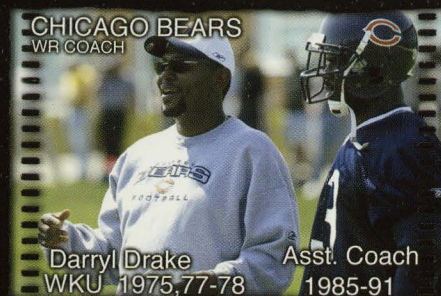
HILLTOPPER FOOTBALL

2004



CLEVELAND BROWNS

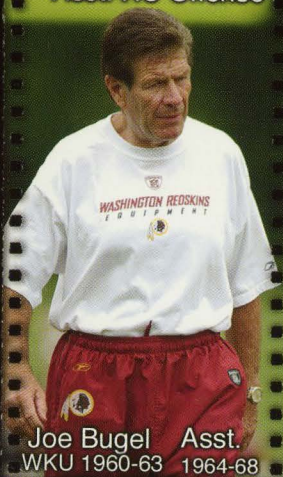
Sherrod Coates
WKU LB 1999-02



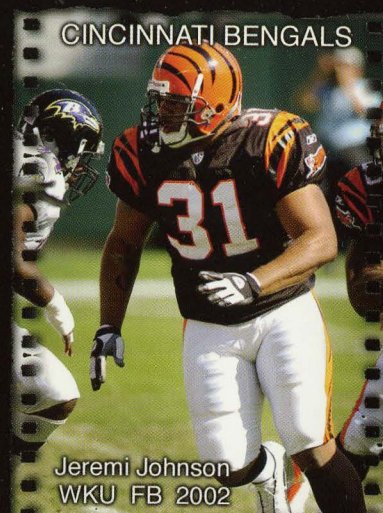
CHICAGO BEARS
WR COACH

Darryl Drake
WKU 1975-77-78

WASHINGTON REDSKINS
Asst. HC Offense



Joe Bugel Asst.
WKU 1960-63 1964-68

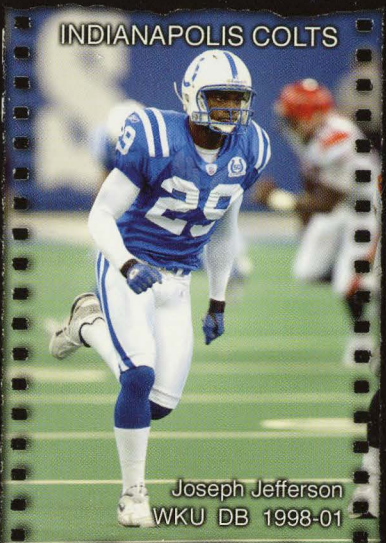


CINCINNATI BENGALS

Jeremi Johnson
WKU FB 2002

WKU

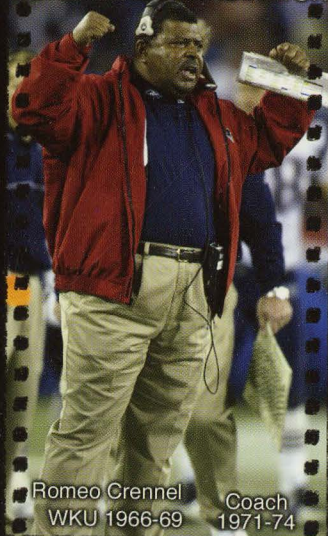
NFL



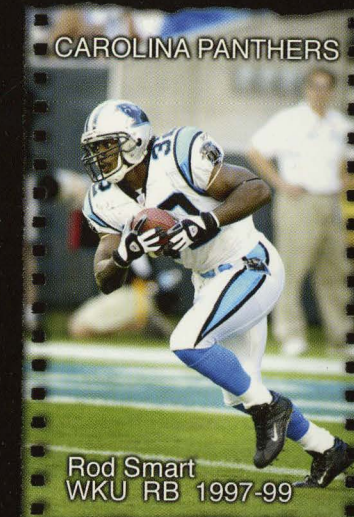
INDIANAPOLIS COLTS

Joseph Jefferson
WKU DB 1998-01

in the
NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR

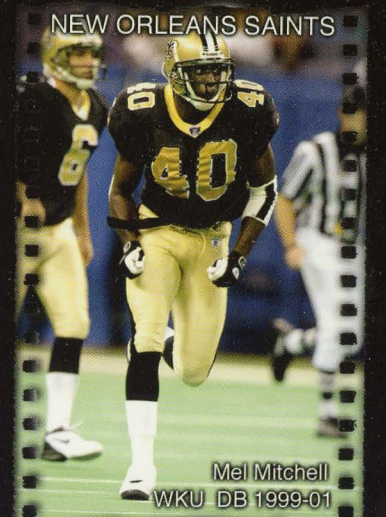


Romeo Crennel
WKU 1966-69



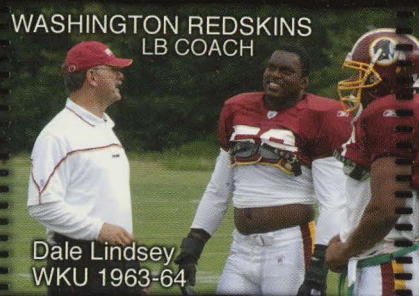
CAROLINA PANTHERS

Rod Smart
WKU RB 1997-99



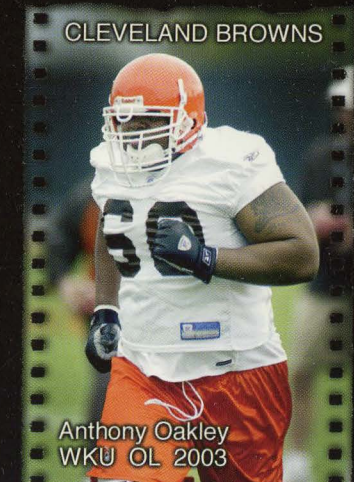
NEW ORLEANS SAINTS

Mel Mitchell
WKU DB 1999-01



WASHINGTON REDSKINS
LB COACH

Dale Lindsey
WKU 1963-64



CLEVELAND BROWNS

Anthony Oakley
WKU OL 2003

2004 — Western Kentucky University Football — 2004



The #3 Hilltoppers vs. #9 Sam Houston State

Game 12 — 1 p.m. (CST), Saturday, November 27 — **NCAA FIRST ROUND**
Bowers Stadium (14,000), Huntsville, Texas



2004 Schedule / Results



Western
Kentucky
Hilltoppers
(9-2, 6-1 GFC)

9/4	at Kansas State	..... L, 13-27
9/11	Concord (W.Va.)	..... W, 58-0
9/18	at Eastern Ky. (GTV)	..... W, 21-8
10/2	Youngstown St.* (GTV)	.. W, 44-19
10/9	at #21 Northern Iowa*	..... W, 17-10
10/16	at #1 Southern Illinois*	..... L, 10-38
10/23	Indiana State* (Hc)	..... W, 31-9
10/30	Illinois State*	..... W, 24-21
11/6	at Southwest Missouri State*	..... W, 28-24
11/13	Western Illinois*	..... W, 45-3
11/20	at Florida International	..... W, 35-14
11/27	at #9 Sam Houston St. (NCAA)	... 1 pm

* Gateway Football Conference game
(Hc) Homecoming / (GTV) Gateway TV game
Home Games Boldface / All Times Central



Sam Houston
State
Bearkats
(9-2, 4-1 SLC)

9/2	Ouachita Baptist	..... W, 60-7
9/11	at SMS	..... L, 31-33
9/18	#1 Montana	..... W, 41-29
9/25	at Southeastern La.	..... W, 45-17
10/7	Tarleton State	..... W, 44-14
10/16	Nicholls State* (Hc)	..... W, 38-10
10/23	Northern Colorado	..... W, 20-7
10/30	at #13 Stephen F. Austin*	..... W, 31-28
11/6	McNeese State*	..... W, 52-47
11/13	at #19 Northwestern (La.) St.	..... L, 27-45
11/20	Texas State	..... W, 27-9
11/27	#3 Western Ky. (NCAA)	..... 1 pm

2004 Gateway Standings

	GFC Games	All Games
	W-L Pct.	W-L Pct.
Southern Illinois	7-0 1.000	10-1 .909
Western Kentucky	6-1 .857	9-2 .818
Northern Iowa	5-2 .714	7-4 .636
SMS	3-4 .429	6-5 .545
Illinois State	2-5 .286	4-7 .364
Western Illinois	2-5 .286	4-7 .364
Youngstown State	2-5 .286	4-7 .364
Indiana State	1-6 .143	4-7 .364

• GAME NOTES •

Records:
Western Kentucky "Hilltoppers" — 9-2, 6-1 Gateway / 9-4, 5-2 Gateway in 2003
Primary Offense: Multiple / Primary Defense: 3-4
Sam Houston State "Bearkats" — 9-2, 4-1 Southland / 2-9, 1-4 Southland in 2003
Primary Offense: Multiple One-Back / Primary Defense: 4-2-5

The Coaches:
David Elson, WKU (Butler '94) / Overall Record: 18-6 (2nd year)
Record at WKU: 18-6 (2nd year) / GFC Record: 11-3 / Playoff Record: 1-1 / vs. SHSU: 0-0
Ron Randleman, SHSU (William Penn '64) / Overall Record: 217-165-6 (36th year)
Record at SHSU: 130-123-3 (23rd year) / Record vs. WKU: 0-0

Last Week: Western earned a 35-14 victory at transitional I-A Florida International ... The Bearkats defeated Texas State, 27-9, to pick up a share of the Southland Conference title.

Next Week: The winner of this game will face the winner of the contest between No. 1 seed Southern Illinois and Eastern Washington.

The Series: first meeting

The Rankings: The Hilltoppers ended the regular season ranked third in the Sports Network and ESPN/USA Today polls, while finishing eighth in Hansen's Football Gazette rankings ... SHSU is ninth in the TSN and coaches' final regular-season rankings as well as 10th in the Football Gazette poll.

Quick Hits: WKU is making its fifth straight NCAA Division I-AA playoff appearance, the second-longest active streak in the nation (Montana has qualified each of the last 12 years) ... The Hilltoppers have advanced to the quarterfinals in each of the last two seasons, and have won at least one postseason contest in five of their seven trips to the NCAA I-AA playoffs ... Western is beginning the playoffs on the road for the first time since 2001 ... The Toppers are 4-5 (44.4%) in the playoffs on an opponent's home field and have a 9-7 (56.3%) all-time mark outside of Bowling Green in the postseason ... This will be WKU's first game ever in Texas in 86 seasons of football ... The Hilltoppers have faced only one school from the state in its history, dropping a 58-27 decision to Lamar in Bowling Green on Sept. 15, 1979.

Hilltopper Team Captains: #71 — Buster Ashley (6-4, 300, Sr., OL, Owensboro, Ky.); #8 — Brian Claybourn (6-1, 185, Sr., P/PK, Evansville, Ind.); and #9 — Charles Thompson (6-1, 240, Sr., ILB, Louisville, Ky.)

Post-Game Interviews ... will be run according to NCAA policy ... The coach and members from the losing team will be available after a 10-minute cooling off period, with the winners to follow approximately 15 minutes later.

About SHSU — The Bearkats — winners of eight of their last nine contests — are 7-0 at home in 2004 ... Walter Payton Award finalist **Dustin Long** (373-229-14, 3408 yds, 31 TDs) leads an offense that ranks in the top 10 nationally in passing yards (2nd — 346.9 ypg), pass efficiency (4th — 162.28 rating), total offense (4th — 475.73 ypg) and scoring (7th — 37.82 ppg) ... **Jarrod Fuller** (74-1111, 7 TDs) leads the Southland Conference in both catches and receiving yards per contest, while both **Jason Mathenia** (51-985, 11 TDs) and **Vincent Fuller** (41-521, 4 TDs) are each in the top 10 in the league in both categories ... **Jason Godfrey** (103-581, 2 TDs) is the team's leading rusher ... SHSU allows 375 yards and 22.4 points per game, but is 23rd in the country in turnover margin thanks to 25 takeaways from the defense ... **Paul Donelson** (43-40 / 83 TT, 10 TFL) leads the unit in both total stops and tackles for loss ... **Marcus Mikulec** (43-37 / 80 TT, 5 TFL) and **Chadd Oliphant** (35-39 / 74 TT) both add more than 70 tackles each ... **Mark Hughes** (32-21 / 53 TT, 5 INTs) is second in the conference in interceptions ... **Bernard Campbell** (16-199, 12.4 avg, 1 TD) and **Robert Garmon** (20-466, 23.3 avg) are ranked nationally in punt and kick returns, respectively ... **Lance Garner** (13-18 FGs, 44-44 PATs) is the Bearkats' leading scorer ... **Curtis Parks** (33-1262, 38.2 avg, 11 I20) is fourth in the conference in punting.

WKU Coach David Elson on SHSU — "Sam Houston State is definitely a top-10 caliber team, they are very athletic on both sides of the ball. Dustin Long is one of the best quarterbacks we've seen this year throwing the ball, and he has a lot of weapons to choose from. Defensively, SHSU is physical and runs to the ball well."

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Hilltopper Athletics on the World Wide Web — www.wkusports.com

Hilltopper Football — On the Air!!



Catch All the WKU Football Action on

The Big Red Radio Network

WPTQ-FM (103.7), Bowling Green*
WANY (106.3 FM / 1390 AM), Albany
WBRT-AM (1320), Bardstown
WTCO-AM (1450), Campbellsville
WIEL-AM (1400), Elizabethtown
WEKT-AM (1070), Elktion
WCDS-AM (1440), Glasgow
WSON-AM (860), Henderson
WKHG-FM (104.9), Leitchfield
WAVG-AM (1450), Louisville
WTTL-AM (1310), Madisonville
WLME-FM (102.9), Owensboro
WPKY-AM (1580), Princeton
* originating station

Your hosts for Hilltopper Football are

Mike Legg

in his fourth year as
"Voice of the Hilltoppers"
and

WKU Hall of Famer
Leo Peckenpaugh

Big Red Radio Network broadcasts of WKU football games are also available to fans outside the Network area via the Hilltoppers' web site at: www.wkusports.com.

Games can also be heard via telephone through the facilities of **TEAMLINE** at 1-800-846-4700 (WKU access code 4460).



TICKETS

For complete ticket information on all Hilltopper athletic events, call: 1-800-5-BIG-RED (long distance) or (270) 745-5222 (local)
Master Card and VISA welcome

Elson A Candidate For Coaching Award — Hilltopper head coach **David Elson** is one of 16 finalists for the **Eddie Robinson Award** given to the NCAA Division I-AA national coach of the year, The Sports Network announced Monday. In just his second season leading WKU, Elson — the youngest coach in Division I — has guided the Toppers to nine wins for the second straight year as well as a No. 3 ranking in the final regular-season polls. His 18 career victories are the most for a Western coach in his first two years on the Hill.

Thompson A Finalist Too — ILB **Charles Thompson** was also recognized by TSN Monday, as the senior is one of 16 candidates for the **Buck Buchanan Award** presented to the top defensive player in I-AA. He ranks second on the team and seventh in the Gateway Football Conference with 92 tackles, including eight behind the line of scrimmage (a figure that equals his total from 2003). With seven tackles (six unassisted) in the regular-season finale at Florida International last week, Thompson became the sixth player in school history to post 400 or more stops in his career — he enters the playoffs ranked fourth all-time with 404.

Postseason Performance — WKU has qualified for the NCAA Division I-AA playoffs in five consecutive seasons — the second-longest active streak in the country — and has advanced to the postseason for the sixth time in the last eight years. The Hilltoppers are 14-8 (63.6%) all-time in postseason play including the Division II playoffs and a pair of bowl games, with an 8-6 (57.1%) mark in the I-AA playoffs. Western has split a pair of road playoff games the last two years, picking up victories at Western Illinois and Georgia Southern in 2002 en route to the national championship.

Western Continues Its Winning Ways — With a 9-2 mark entering the postseason, the Toppers have posted a record over .500 in each of the last nine years — that ties the second-longest streak in school history. This year's nine-member senior class has led Western to at least eight victories in each of the last four seasons, compiling a 38-13 (74.5%) record in that time including a league-best 22-6 (78.6%) mark in Gateway Conference action during that span.

Another Opportunity Against A Southland Foe — The Hilltoppers have faced only one current member of the Southland Conference, taking two of three contests from McNeese State in 2001 and '02. Western lost the only road game in that series, 38-13, on Sept. 28, 2002, but rebounded to defeat the Cowboys, 34-14, on Dec. 20 that year to claim the program's first-ever national championship in the Toppers' only postseason meeting with a league foe. The Hilltoppers 21-0 victory over MSU on Oct. 20, 2001, was their last shutout against a Division I-AA non-conference opponent.

Hilltopper Football has won 75 of its last 101 games (74.3%) since October 1996.

WKU-SHSU Stats Comparison (2003 — 11 games) —

WKU Offense	SHSU Defense	SHSU Offense	WKU Defense
29.6	22.4	Scoring	37.8
18.9	20.1	First Downs	23.7
237.5	167.2	Rushing Yards	128.8
5.2	4.1	Yards per Rush	4.1
163.7	207.8	Passing Yards	346.9
9.2	6.5	Yards per Pass Attempt	9.4
401.2	375.0	Total Offense	475.7
6.3	5.2	Yards per Play	7.0
1.7	2.3	Turnovers	1.7

WKU-SHSU NCAA Stat Rankings —

WKU	SHSU
12th — 237.45	Rushing Yards
85th — 163.7	Passing Yards
22th — 140.20	Pass Efficiency
27nd — 401.18	Total Offense
2nd — 40.30	Net Punting
28th — 11.32	Punt Returns
50th — 20.11	Kickoff Returns
35th — 29.64	Scoring
39th — 134.1	Rushing Defense
62nd — 200.36	Passing Defense
24th — 106.60	Pass Efficiency Defense
46th — 334.45	Total Defense
5th — 15.7	Scoring Defense
17th — +0.82	Turnover Margin

Weights & Measures — Here's a look at how the "Probable Starting Lineups" for the WKU-SHSU game compare — by average height and weight:

WKU	vs.	SHSU	Advantage (Ht.; Wt.)
Off. Line (6-3, 292)		Def. Line (6-3, 266)	even; WKU — 26 lbs.
Receivers (6-0, 193)		Def. Backs (5-11, 191)	WKU — 1"; 2 lbs.
Off. Backs (6-0, 217)		Linebackers (6-1, 245)	SHSU — 1"; 28 lbs.
Def. Line (6-2, 273)		Off. Line (6-3, 285)	SHSU — 1"; 12 lbs.
Def. Backs (6-0, 185)		Receivers (6-1, 219)	SHSU — 1"; 34 lbs.
Linebackers (6-1, 227½)		Off. Backs (6-1, 200)	even; WKU — 27½ lbs.

Offense Gets It Going In Postseason — Over the last two seasons, the Topper offense has averaged 36.2 points per outing while scoring fewer than 30 points just once in six playoff games. In its two first-round contests those years, WKU has posted an average of 52 points per game while earning a pair of victories.

Unit Enters 2004 Playoffs On A Roll — The Hilltoppers come into this year's first-round playoff game having averaged 397.3 rushing yards and 498.7 yards of total offense in winning all three games this month. Western is scoring 36 points per outing in November and has won its last two contests by at least three touchdowns.

Grinding The Ground Game To A Halt — During its current five-game winning streak, WKU has given up an average of just 81.8 yards per contest on the ground while holding four of five opponents to less than 100 yards rushing. The Hilltoppers are 5-0 this season when holding the opposition below triple figures on the ground.

On The Road Again — This game will mark the third time in the last four weeks that Western will take to the road, with the Toppers claiming the last two contests away from home while posting a 3-2 record outside of Bowling Green in 2004. WKU is 22-14 (61.1%) in road games over the last six seasons.

On This Date in Hilltopper History — This will be the Hilltoppers' fifth game played on Nov. 27 in 86 seasons ... Western is 1-2-1 all-time on this day, although it has dropped two of the last three decisions ... Three of the contests have come at home with no site known for the 1927 game ... The Toppers scored 73 points in earning the one victory and nine points combined in the other three outings ... The WKU defense has pitched a shut-out in two of the four games ... Here's a game-by-game look at the Nov. 27 games in the Topper record book:

- 1927 Bethel (Ky.) W, 73-0

This is still the largest margin of victory in the Hilltopper record books.

- 1926 College of the Ozarks L, 3-14
- 1930 Kalamazoo T, 0-0
- 1946 Murray State L, 6-55

The 2004 Hilltoppers are ...

1-1 against ranked opponents
5-0 at home / 4-2 on the road
4-2 in night games / 5-0 in day games
1-0 on natural grass / 8-2 on artificial turf
7-0 when scoring first in the game
7-0 when scoring first in the second half
5-0 when leading after the 1st quarter
4-1 when tied after the first quarter
5-0 when leading at halftime
3-0 when tied at halftime
7-0 when leading after 3 quarters
1-0 when tied after 3 quarters
8-0 when leading with 10 minutes to play
0-0 when tied with 10 minutes to play
9-0 when leading with 5 minutes to play
0-0 when tied with 5 minutes to play
4-0 when totaling more first downs
0-0 when totaling the same first downs
8-0 when totaling more rushing yards
2-1 when totaling more passing yards
6-0 when totaling more total offense yards
5-1 without an interception
2-1 without a fumble lost
5-1 with fewer turnovers
3-0 with same turnovers
4-0 with fewer penalties
1-1 with same penalties

2004 Western Kentucky Weekly Honors

BUSTER ASHLEY

6-4, 300, Senior, OL, Owensboro Senior High / Louisville)

■ Gateway Conference Offensive Lineman of the Week, Nov. 13

Graded out at 95 percent overall with a 100 percent assignment grade and a factor grade of 97 percent ... Had 16 pancake blocks, did not allow a sack or a quarterback pressure, and did not commit a penalty ... Helped WKU post season highs of 473 rushing yards and 535 yards of total offense.

■ Gateway Conference Offensive Lineman of the Week, Sept. 18

Recorded overall and factor grades of 95 percent ... Credited with 13 pancake blocks ... Held preseason all-OVC pick Chad Dewberry to only three tackles with no sacks ... Helped WKU average 5.3 yards per snap while posting 328 yards of total offense against instate rival Eastern Kentucky.

BRIAN CLAYBOURN

6-1, 185, Senior, P/PK, Evansville, Ind. (Reitz High)

■ Gateway Conference Special Teams Player of the Week, Oct. 30

Averaged 48.2 yards per punt with two kicks over 50 yards including a long of 58 ... Illinois State started four of five drives following punts inside own 30-yard line ... All five kickoffs were downed for touchbacks.

GETTY CAVITT

6-1, 240, Senior, OLB, Owensboro, Ky. (Owensboro Senior High)

■ Gateway Conference Defensive Player of the Week, Oct. 30

Tied a career high with 13 total tackles to lead all players in win over Illinois State ... Broke up two passes ... Helped WKU limit the Redbirds to just 337 total yards — including a season-low 82 on the ground — and a season-low-tying 21 points, 12 below their average entering the contest.

DENNIS MITCHELL

5-8, 180, Junior, SS, Indianapolis, Ind. (Warren Central High)

■ Gateway Conference Special Teams Player of the Week, Nov. 20

Set up the game-winning score with a 38-yard kick return to start the second half, then blocked a field goal on the first play of the fourth quarter with the Hilltoppers holding on to a seven-point advantage as Western earned a three-touchdown victory at transitional I-A Florida International ... Helped set the stage for the blocked kick with a 4-yard tackle for loss on 1st-and-goal from the WKU-3 and a pass defended one snap later.

LERRON MOORE

5-10, 210, Junior, RB, Columbus, Ohio (Bishop Watterson High)

■ Gateway Conference co-Offensive Player of the Week, Nov. 13

Matched a school record with four touchdowns while running for a career-best 219 yards on 34 carries ... Posted 146 yards in the first half with both of the Toppers' touchdowns as Western led, 17-3 ... Gave WKU the lead for good with 9-yard scoring run just under six minutes into the game ... Added second touchdown after carrying on 10 of the 11 plays during the possession ... Had three first-down runs on drive that resulted in third score.

BRIAN PORTER

5-9, 180, Sophomore, RB, Germantown, Md. (Gaithersburg High)

■ Sports Network Offensive Player of the Week, Nov. 20

■ Gateway Conference Offensive Player of the Week, Nov. 20

Led the Hilltoppers to a 35-14 victory at transitional I-A Florida International Saturday with a career-best 213 yards and school-record-tying four touchdowns ... Recorded all three second-half scores by either team, giving Western the lead for good with a 5-yard run to cap the opening possession of the third quarter while adding touchdown runs of 67 and 46 yards in the final period to put the game away. Accounted for 222 of WKU's 500 total yards from scrimmage while averaging 8.9 yards per attempt.

DEONTÉ SMITH

6-1, 210, Senior, ILB, Louisville, Ky. (St. Xavier High / Indiana)

■ Gateway Conference Defensive Player of the Week, Nov. 13

Posted 11 tackles with a sack in the Hilltoppers 45-3 win over Western Illinois, leading WKU in tackles for the third consecutive contest ... Helped hold a Leatherneck offense that entered the game averaging 30.8 points and 396.1 yards per contest to an opponent-low 178 yards — WIU did not have 100 yards rushing or passing.

■ I-AA.org Defensive Player of the Week, Oct. 2

■ Hansen's Football Gazette Defensive Player of the Week, Oct. 2

■ Gateway Conference Defensive Player of the Week, Oct. 2

Had a career-best 12 tackles to share game-high honors, including 1½ for loss, to go along with a forced fumble, a fumble recovery and his first career interception which he returned 48 yards for a touchdown ... Forced a fumble on the WKU-1 with the Hilltoppers protecting a 16-7 lead in the third quarter ... Interception return on first play of fourth quarter helped put win over Youngstown State away.

CHARLES THOMPSON

6-1, 240, Senior, ILB, Louisville, Ky. (Central High)

■ Sports Network Defensive Player of the Week, Sept. 18

■ I-AA.org Defensive Player of the Week, Sept. 18

■ CSTV: College Sports Television Defensive Player of the Week, Sept. 18

■ Gateway Conference Defensive Player of the Week, Sept. 18

Had a career-best 18 tackles in the Hilltoppers' 21-8 victory over instate rival Eastern Kentucky, including 2½ for loss ... Broke up two passes ... Efforts helped hold ECU to 260 total yards while forcing seven turnovers.

■ Gateway Conference Defensive Player of the Week, Sept. 4

Led all players with 13 tackles at Kansas State, also recovered the only fumble of the game leading to the Hilltopper's first scoring drive.

Record Book

WESTERN KENTUCKY

Total Offense Yards — Season

- 2,542 — Jeff Cesarone, 1985
- 2,403 — Willie Taggart, 1997
- 2,303 — Jason Michael, 2002
- 2,169 — Jeff Cesarone, 1986
- 2,168 — Justin Haddix, 2003**
- 2,164 — Johnny Vance, 1969
- 2,012 — Willie Taggart, 1998
- 2,000 — Justin Haddix, 2004**
- 1,904 — Jason Johnson, 2000
- 1,820 — J.J. Jewell, 1994

Total Offense Yards — Career

- 7,852 — Jeff Cesarone, 1984-87
- 7,323 — Willie Taggart, 1995-98
- 4,782 — Johnny Vance, 1966-69
- 4,168 — Justin Haddix, 2003-**
- 4,109 — Eddie Thompson, 1991-93

Rushing Yards — Career

- 3,997 — Willie Taggart, 1995-98
- 3,775 — Antwan Floyd, 1993-96
- 3,570 — Joe Arnold, 1985-88
- 3,560 — Dickie Moore, 1965-68
- 2,707 — Clarence Jackson, 1970-73
- 2,479 — Jimmy Woods, 1975-78
- 2,460 — Lerron Moore, 2003-**
- 2,349 — Eddie Thompson, 1991-93
- 2,243 — Gene McFadden, 1950-53
- 2,219 — John Embree, 1970-73

100-Yard Games — Career

- 18 — Antwan Floyd, 1993-96
- 17 — Willie Taggart, 1995-98
- 17 — Dickie Moore, 1965-68
- 13 — Joe Arnold, 1985-88
- 12 — Lerron Moore, 2003-**

Completion Percentage — Career (min 300 atts)

- .546 — Justin Haddix, 2003-**
- .536 — Ralph Antone, 1979-82
- .533 — Jeff Cesarone, 1984-87
- .501 — John Hall, 1977-80
- .496 — Mike Egan, 1965-68

Completions — Season

- 253 — Jeff Cesarone, 1985
- 207 — Jeff Cesarone, 1986
- 155 — Johnny Vance, 1969
- 152 — Jeff Cesarone, 1987
- 135 — Ralph Antone, 1982
- 127 — Jimmy Feix, 1952
- 123 — Jeff Cesarone, 1984
- 117 — David Armstrong, 1988
- 113 — Justin Haddix, 2003**
- 112 — Justin Haddix, 2004**

Passing Yards — Season

- 2,737 — Jeff Cesarone, 1985
- 2,396 — Jeff Cesarone, 1986
- 1,943 — Johnny Vance, 1969
- 1,887 — Jeff Cesarone, 1987
- 1,875 — Justin Haddix, 2003**
- 1,752 — Jimmy Feix, 1952
- 1,734 — Justin Haddix, 2004**
- 1,661 — Jason Michael, 2002
- 1,657 — Ralph Antone, 1982
- 1,546 — Jeff Cesarone, 1984

Porter Picks Up Pair Of Honors — Sophomore **Brian Porter** earned *Offensive Player-of-the-Week* honors from both *The Sports Network* and the *Gateway Conference* after matching a school record with four touchdowns while rushing for a career-best 213 yards at FIU. Porter — who now ranks 10th in the league with 57.3 yards per outing — broke a 14-14 tie with a 5-yard touchdown run on the Hilltoppers' first drive of the second half, then put the game out of reach with scores from 67 and 46 yards out in the fourth quarter. The 67-yard dash was the longest run from scrimmage by a Topper this season.

Strong Safety Named Special Teams Player Of The Week — **Dennis Mitchell** was named the *Gateway's Special Teams Player of the Week* after he set up the game-winning score with a 38-yard kick return to start the second half, then blocked a field goal on the first play of the fourth quarter with the Hilltoppers holding on to a seven-point advantage as Western earned a three-touchdown victory at transitional I-A Florida International to close the regular season. The junior helped set the stage for the blocked kick with a 4-yard tackle for loss on 1st-and-goal from the WKU-3 and a pass defended one snap later, as he ended the day with eight tackles (seven unassisted).

Moore Moving Up Charts — RB **Lerron Moore** leads the team on the ground with 107.8 yards per contest, as he is 30 yards shy of posting back-to-back 1,000-yard seasons — current assistant head coach **Willie Taggart** was the last player to accomplish the feat after leading the Hilltoppers in rushing in both 1997 and '98. Moore enters the postseason needing just 40 yards to post 2,500 in his first two years on the Hill, as he already ranks seventh in school history in rushing.

Smith Has Solid Final Season — Senior **Deonté Smith** is WKU's leading tackler entering the Sam Houston State contest, as he has posted 98 total stops — including a team-high-tying 10½ for loss — in his second, and final, year on the Hill. One of two Western linebackers to claim the Gateway Conference Defensive Player-of-the-Week award twice this fall, he has a team-best five contests with double-figure tackles while leading the Hilltoppers in the category on five occasions.

No Sophomore Slump For WKU QB — **Justin Haddix** ended the regular season with 2,000 yards of total offense, becoming the first Topper to reach that plateau prior to the playoffs since Taggart — the sophomore's position coach — had 2,012 in 11 games in 1998. In fact, he's the first individual on the Hill to post back-to-back seasons with 2,000 yards of total offense since **Jeff Cesarone** accomplished the feat in 1985 and '86. Haddix ranks eighth on the season record list in the category, while he also stands seventh with 1,734 passing yards this year.

Thomas Tops Topper Defense At FIU — CB **Antonio Thomas** had a game-high-tying nine tackles (seven unassisted) and broke up a pass in helping WKU defeat transitional I-A Florida International last week, with one of the stops coming on third down inside the WKU-10 that led to a blocked field goal. The senior's efforts helped the Toppers hold the Golden Panthers scoreless in the second half as well as two touchdowns below their scoring average entering the game. Thomas — who has a career-high 70 tackles to lead all conference cornerbacks — is tied for second in the league, and 11th nationally, after recording six interceptions in the regular season.

Perkins Picks Up Slack In Western Receiving Corps — The Hilltoppers came into 2004 minus the services of last year's top two receivers, **Casey Rooney** and **Shannon Hayes**, who combined to post 1,553 yards in their final season. But, junior **Maurice Perkins** has helped fill the void, leading WKU with 38 catches for 746 yards to rank in the top 10 in the Gateway in both receptions and yards per contest. Perkins led Western in receiving in nine of 11 games in the regular season after posting two catches for a team-high 56 yards in last week's victory over the Golden Panthers. He ranks third on the squad with 826 all-purpose yards after adding 80 on the ground, as Perkins averaged 13.3 yards per carry.

Cavitt Has Career Year In Final Season On The Hill — **Getty Cavitt** moved from the defensive line to outside linebacker in the preseason, with the senior posting a career-best 76 total tackles including 8½ behind the line of scrimmage this fall. After collecting six stops in the regular-season finale last week, he needs just two tackles in the postseason to equal his two-year total coming into 2004. Cavitt is one of six Hilltoppers with more than one interception, and he also leads Western's linebackers with three passes broken up.

Punter Has A Place In WKU Record Book — Senior P **Brian Claybourn** enters the playoffs ranked second all-time at Western with 223 punts for 9,120 yards in his four-year career, as his average of 40.9 yards per kick also is the second-highest in school history. Claybourn is fourth nationally entering the postseason after averaging a career-best 43.7 yards per punt this fall — that's more than a yard higher than the previous school standard set by **Ray Farmer** in 1980 — as his efforts have the Hilltoppers ranked second in the country with a net of 40.3 yards per kick. Claybourn averaged better than 42 yards per punt in eight of 11 contests this season after he posted an average of 46 yards per kick at FIU.

Rumph Ready From The Start — FS **Marion Rumph** is the only true freshman to start every game this year, finishing the regular season fifth on the squad with 64 total tackles. It's the most stops by a Topper in his first collegiate season since **Bobby Sippio** recorded 75 in 1999 — Rumph matched the former All-American's first-year interception total when he picked off his fourth pass in last week's FIU victory. His six tackles against the Golden Panthers were the most he has collected since making eight stops in the Toppers' Homecoming win over Indiana State on Oct. 23.

Fortifying The Front Line — Junior-college transfers **Joe Woolridge** (34) and **Daniel Williams** (30) added immediate assistance to the WKU defensive line, ranking first and second in tackles at the position, respectively. Williams is fifth on the team with 7½ stops for loss, while Woolridge is one of three players on defense to both force and recover a fumble this fall.

Willis Gives Western Triple Threat At Tailback — Although he missed the Florida International game, **Stephen Willis** has rushed for 451 yards and five touchdowns in his first year on the Hill. In addition to averaging 5.4 yards per carry, Willis' 127 yards (on eight receptions) led WKU's running back contingent. His career-best 178 yards Nov. 6 at Southwest Missouri State started a string in which each of the Toppers' regular running backs posted a career-high total in the final three games of the regular season — Moore collected a Western season-best 219 yards on the ground in a win over Western Illinois prior to Porter's performance last weekend.

B. Smith In The Backfield — Junior OLB **Brandon Smith** ended the regular season tied for the conference lead with 0.45 sacks per contest after recording a team-best five this fall, while he also matched **Deonté Smith** with a team-high 10½ tackles behind the line of scrimmage. Smith has 17 stops in the last three games after posting 13 in the previous four outings.

The Other New Cornerback — **Artis Neal** was one of three Hilltoppers to intercept a pass in last week's victory at FIU, giving him three in his first season as a starter. Neal — who had just one tackle in eight appearances in 2003 — has recorded 39 stops this year and enters the playoffs ranked second on the squad with six passes broken up.

James Earns Kicking Job In Midseason — **Chris James** took over Western's placekicking duties in the Toppers' Gateway Conference opener against Youngstown State Oct. 2, going on to hit 8-of-11 field-goal attempts while converting all 31 points-after-touchdown. The redshirt freshman ranks third on the team with 55 points, as he needs four more to pass former All-American **Jeff Poisel** and move into the top 10 on the season record list for scoring by a kicker.

Clemons Makes A Comeback — WR **Cory Clemons** caught three passes for 78 yards in his collegiate debut against Youngstown State, but was sidelined with an injury prior to the Hilltoppers' game the following week at Northern Iowa as he ended up missing the last four contests in October. The freshman has three receptions in the last two weeks after grabbing two in his first career start last week at Florida International.

Triple Threat — **Blake Ladson** has proven to be a threat in multiple ways for the WKU offense this season, rushing for 136 yards, throwing for another 67 and adding two receptions for 18 yards. The sophomore quarterback — who has completed all nine pass attempts in his two-year career — collected 31 yards on his only rushing attempt in the fourth quarter of last week's victory.

Hamilton Gives Haddix A Deep Threat — WR **Curtis Hamilton** is one of three Toppers to catch at least 10 passes this season, as his average of 20.1 yards per reception leads Western's wideouts. Hamilton caught at least one pass in four straight contests from Oct. 16-Nov. 6 before suffering an injury on the first play of the Western Illinois game that caused him to sit out last week. Hamilton has the most receptions by a WKU freshman since **Donte Pimpleton** collected 15 in 1998.

Clayton Makes Them Count — **Earl Clayton** has six catches this year, but two of those have hit paydirt as the junior is tied for the team lead in touchdown receptions. His 53-yard touchdown catch in a 31-9 win over Indiana State on Oct. 23 is still Western's longest scoring play through the air this fall.

Cassity Coming On — Redshirt freshman **Ross Cassity** has started the last three contests at fullback and although he has just three carries for seven yards, he caught four passes for 34 yards in five appearances — that reception total is equal to the combined number of catches by the other three Hilltoppers who have manned the position this fall.

On The Move — The Toppers had 23 first downs in the FIU victory, giving them more than 20 in each of the last three regular season games. It's the first time Western has recorded 20 or more first downs in three straight contests since Oct. 5-19, 2002.

Time Of Possession A Telling Stat — WKU has won the battle for time of possession in each of its last four games after controlling the ball for more than 30 minutes just once in this season's first seven contests. As a result, Western has run more than 70 plays in each of the last three weeks after failing to take that many snaps in the first eight games of the season. The Hilltoppers have won their last seven contests when holding the ball longer than the opposition.

Conversion Rate Climbing — Western enters the playoffs leading the Gateway in third-down conversions at 44.9 percent after successfully moving the chains more than half the time in each of the last four contests. The Toppers have converted 35 of their last 60 third downs (58.3%), and have also been successful on their last three fourth-down conversions in the last two games.

The Toppers And Turnovers — With three interceptions of FIU QB **Josh Padrick** last week against just one lost fumble, the Toppers posted a positive turnover margin for the first time since defeating nationally ranked Northern Iowa Oct. 9. Western — which still ranks 17th in the nation with a plus-0.82 turnover margin entering the postseason, as their 28 takeaways are 14th in the country — is 8-1 this season when committing the same or fewer miscues than the opposition.

Toppers Used To Aerial Attacks — During their five-game winning streak, the Hilltoppers have seen the opposing offense attempt more than 30 passes in every contest. WKU is 8-0 this year when the opposition throws 30 or more passes, and has won its last 15 contests when facing a minimum of 30 attempts through the air dating back to the start of the 2002 season.

Record Book (cont'd)

Pass Efficiency — Season (min 90 atts)

- 157.48 — Jason Johnson, 2000
- 157.11 — Jason Michael, 2002
- 147.98 — Leo Peckenpaugh, 1973
- 140.89 — Willie Taggart, 1997
- 137.28 — Justin Haddix, 2004**
- 135.80 — J.J. Jewell, 1994
- 134.63 — Eddie Thompson, 1993
- 134.26 — Justin Haddix, 2003**

Pass Efficiency — Career (min 250 atts)

- 135.64 — Justin Haddix, 2003-**
- 127.71 — Willie Taggart, 1995-98
- 117.10 — Ralph Antone, 1979-82
- 113.45 — Jimmy Feix, 1949-52
- 112.89 — John Hall, 1977-80

Scoring — Game

- 24 — Brian Porter at Fla. International, 11/20/04**
24 — Lerron Moore vs. Western Illinois, 11/13/04
24 — Eddie Thompson vs. Southern Illinois, 10/29/92
24 — Joe Arnold at North Carolina A&T, 11/21/87
24 — Porter Williams vs. Murray State, 11/17/73
24 — Dickie Moore vs. Tennessee Tech, 10/14/67
24 — Carroll Broderick vs. Evansville, 9/24/32

Touchdowns — Game

- 4 — Brian Porter at Fla. International, 11/20/04**
4 — Lerron Moore vs. Western Illinois, 11/13/04
4 — Eddie Thompson vs. Southern Illinois, 10/29/92
4 — Joe Arnold at North Carolina A&T, 11/21/87
4 — Porter Williams vs. Murray State, 11/17/73
4 — Dickie Moore vs. Tennessee Tech, 10/14/67

Touchdowns — Season

- 19 — Clarence Jackson, 1973
- 19 — Dickie Moore, 1967
- 16 — Willie Taggart, 1997
- 15 — Willie Taggart, 1998
- 15 — Joe Arnold, 1988
- 14 — Jason Michael, 2002
- 13 — Brian Porter, 2004**
13 — Lerron Moore, 2003
- 12 — Jon Frazier, 2002
- 12 — Troy Snardon, 1980
- 12 — Max Stevens, 1952

Unassisted Tackles — Career

- 317 — Rick Green, 1972-75
- 252 — Biff Madon, 1974-77
- 248 — Melvin Wisham, 1997-00
- 241 — Erik Dandy, 2000-03
- 229 — Tony Towns, 1976-78
- 225 — Reginald Hayden, 1976-78
- 225 — Lawrence Brame, 1967-70
- 218 — Richard Grice, 1989-92
- 214 — Sherrod Coates, 1999-02
- 207 — Charles Thompson, 2001-**

Assisted Tackles — Career

- 298 — Paul Gray, 1980-83
- 223 — Rick Green, 1972-75
- 206 — Walter York, 1980-83
- 197 — Charles Thompson, 2001-**
- 192 — Tom Tussey, 1979-81

Total Tackles — Career

- 540 — Rick Green, 1972-75
- 488 — Paul Gray, 1980-83
- 424 — Erik Dandy, 2000-03
- 404 — Charles Thompson, 2001-**
- 401 — Melvin Wisham, 1997-00
- 401 — Biff Madon, 1974-77

Gateway Football Conference Preseason Poll

(As selected by head coaches, sports information directors and selected media)

1.	Southern Illinois (25)	244
2.	Northern Iowa (6)	212
3.	WESTERN KENTUCKY (1)	186
4.	Western Illinois	174
5.	Illinois State	110
6.	Youngstown State	102
7.	Southwest Missouri State	81
8.	Indiana State	43

(first-place votes in parentheses)

Preseason All-Gateway Team

OFFENSE

QB	Joel Sambursky, Jr., Southern Illinois
RB	Terrance Freeney, Jr., UNI
FB	Travis Glasford, Jr., Western Illinois
FB	Mike Larson, Sr., Illinois State
WR	Reggie Gray, Jr., Western Illinois
	Steven Rush, Sr., SMS
TE	Mike Roberts, Sr., Youngstown State
OL	Buster Ashley, Sr., Western Kentucky
	Stafford Davis, Jr., Illinois State
	Fred Layne, Sr., Western Illinois
	Elmer McDaniel, Sr., Southern Illinois
	Stuart Williams, Sr., Indiana State
PK	Stephen Carroll, Sr., Illinois State

DEFENSE

DL	Billy Beard, Sr., Southern Illinois
	Linton Brown, Jr., Southern Illinois
	Kyle Mitchell, Jr., Indiana State
	Steve Watson, Sr., SMS
LB	Boomer Grigsby, Sr., Illinois State
	Brandon Smith, Jr., Western Kentucky
	Charles Thompson, Sr., Western Kentucky
	Royal Whitaker, Jr., Southern Illinois
DB	Mike Bracken, Sr., Youngstown State
	Dre Dokes, So., UNI
	Frank Johnson, Jr., Southern Illinois
	Alexis Moreland, Sr., Southern Illinois
P	Brian Claybourn, Sr., Western Kentucky
RS	James Norris, Sr., Western Illinois

HONORABLE MENTION

QB	Tom Petrie, Jr., UNI
RB	Lerron Moore, Jr., Western Kentucky
	Cody Pratt, Sr., SMS
FB	Matt Yellin, Jr., Youngstown State
WR	Brent Little, Jr., Southern Illinois
	James Norris, Sr., Western Illinois
TE	Andy Thorn, Sr., UNI
OL	Jeremy Melville, Sr., Illinois State
	Brad Durham, Sr., SMS
	Mike Stegeman, Jr., Illinois State
PK	Brian Wingert, So., UNI
	Nick Terracina, Sr., Youngstown State
	Justin Langan, Sr., Western Illinois
DL	Kevin Stensrud, Jr., UNI
	Charlie Phillips, Jr., Western Kentucky
LB	Kevin Sears, So., SMS
DB	Antwan Oliver, Sr., Illinois State
	Torre Endsley, Sr., SMS
P	Ryan Hoffman, Jr., Illinois State
RS	Steven Rush, Sr., SMS

Western Among The Gateway Leaders

TEAM

Rushing Offense (yards per game)

1.	Southern Illinois	282.3
2.	Western Kentucky	237.5

Passing Offense (yards per game)

1.	Illinois State	226.8
8.	Western Kentucky	163.7

Pass Efficiency Offense (rating points)

1.	Southern Illinois	173.6
3.	Western Kentucky	140.2

Total Offense (yards per game)

1.	Southern Illinois	506.4
2.	Western Kentucky	401.2

Net Punting (average per play)

1.	Western Kentucky	40.3
2.	Illinois State	36.1

Punt Returns (yards per return)

1.	Western Kentucky	11.3
2.	SMS	11.2

Kickoff Returns (yards per return)

1.	SMS	23.3
6.	Western Kentucky	20.1

Scoring Offense (points per game)

1.	Southern Illinois	43.6
3.	Western Kentucky	29.6

Rushing Defense (yards per game)

1.	Southern Illinois	99.0
3.	Western Kentucky	134.1

Passing Defense (yards per game)

1.	Western Illinois	157.2
5.	Western Kentucky	200.4

Pass Efficiency Defense (rating points)

1.	Southern Illinois	90.6
3.	Western Kentucky	106.6

Total Defense (yards per game)

1.	Southern Illinois	280.4
3.	Western Kentucky	334.5

Scoring Defense (points per game)

1.	Southern Illinois	11.2
2.	Western Kentucky	15.7

Turnover Margin (+/-)

1.	Southern Illinois	+1.18
4.	Western Kentucky	+0.82

INDIVIDUAL

Rushing (yards per game)

1.	Travis Glasford, WIU	108.0
2.	Lerron Moore, WKU	107.8
10.	Brian Porter, WKU	57.3

Passing (yards per game)

1.	Yance Vaughn, ILS	225.9
7.	Justin Haddix, WKU	157.6

Pass Efficiency (rating points)

1.	Joel Sambursky, SIU	175.3
3.	Justin Haddix, WKU	137.3

Total Offense (yards per game)

1.	Yance Vaughn, ILS	227.2
4.	Justin Haddix, WKU	181.8
10.	Lerron Moore, WKU	107.8

Receptions per Game

1.	Steven Rysh, SMS	5.60
7.	Maurice Perkins, WKU	3.45

Receiving Yards per Game

1.	Brent Little, SIU	76.0
4.	Maurice Perkins, WKU	67.8

Interceptions (interceptions per game)

1.	Darren Barnett, SMS	0.64
2.	Antonio Thomas, WKU	0.55
t6.	Marion Rumph, WKU	0.36

Punting (average per kick)

1.	Ryan Hoffman, ILS	43.9
2.	Brian Claybourn, WKU	43.7

Punt Returns (average per return)

1.	Dennis Mitchell, WKU	11.4
2.	Joe Walkins, ILS	10.4

Kickoff Returns (average per return)

1.	Scottie Reddix, SMS	25.8
7.	Dennis Mitchell, WKU	20.1

Field Goals (field goals made per game)

1.	Kyle Hooper, INS	1.45
7.	Chris James, WKU	0.89

Scoring (points per game)

1.	Craig Coffin, SIU	8.9
3.	Lerron Moore, WKU	7.3
t7.	Brian Porter, WKU	7.1

All-Purpose Running (yards per game)

1.	Travis Glasford, WIU	154.4
4.	Lerron Moore, WKU	114.2

Tackles (per game)

1.	Boomer Grigsby, ILS	12.9
6.	Deonté Smith, WKU	8.9
7.	Charles Thompson, WKU	8.4

Tackles For Loss (per game)

1.	Brent Hawkins, ILS	1.50
5.	Brandon Smith, WKU	0.95
	Deonté Smith, WKU	0.95

Sacks (per game)

1.	Brandon Smith, WKU	0.45
	Phillips Doyle, SIU	0.45

The Red Zone

	WKU	Opponents
Trips	46	37
TDs	33	18
FGs	8	6
Pct. TD	71.7	48.6
Pct. Score	89.1	64.9

Fumble	2	3
INT	0	3
Missed FG	2	3
Downs	1	4
End Half	0	0

WKU Breakdown by Game
at K-State — 3 trips, 2 TDs, 0 FGs, 67% score
vs. Concord — 8 trips, 7 TDs, 1 FG, 100% score
at ECU — 2 trips, 2 TDs, 0 FGs, 100% score
vs. YSU — 3 trips, 1 TD, 2 FGs, 100% score
at UNI — 4 trips, 1 TD, 1 FG, 50% score
at SIU — 2 trips, 1 TD, 1 FG, 100% score
vs. INS — 5 trips, 3 TDs, 1 FG, 80% score
vs. ILS — 4 trips, 3 TDs, 1 FG, 100% score
at SMS — 4 trips, 4 TDs, 0 FGs, 100% score
vs. WIU — 7 trips, 6 TDs, 1 FG, 100% score
at FIU — 4 trips, 3 TDs, 0 FGs, 75% score

The Last Time Out

#3 WKU 35, Florida International 14

November 20, 2004 / Miami, Fla.

	WKU	FIU
First Downs	23	14
Rush-Pass-Pen	17-6-0	9-15-0
Rush Atts-Net Yards	59-383	32-133
Net Yards Passing	117	286
Att-Comp-Int	14-9-0	44-27-3
Total Plays-Net Yards	73-500	76-419
Avg. Gain Per Play	6.8	5.5
Fumbles-Lost	1-1	0-0
Penalties-Yards	4-33	5-34
Interceptions-Yards	3-6	0-0
Punts-Average	2-46.0	2-36.0
Punt Returns-Yards	0-0	1-9
Kickoff Returns-Yards	2-38	3-59
Possession Time	32:36	27:24
Third-Down Conversions	8-14	9-16

WKU (9-2)	0-14-7-14	35
FIU (2-6)	0-14-0-0	14

SCORING SUMMARY

2nd Quarter

WKU — Justin Haddix, 3, run (Chris James kick), 14:55 (84 yds, 17 plays, 8:06)

WKU — Brian Porter, 2, run (James kick), 3:54 (80 yds, 15 plays, 5:23)

FIU — Rashod Smith, 19, run (Adam Moss kick), 2:48 (65 yds, 5 plays, 1:00)

FIU — Cory McKinney, 4, pass from Josh Padrick (Moss kick), 0:10 (64 yds, 9 plays, 1:38)

3rd Quarter

WKU — Porter, 5, run (James kick), 12:23 (62 yds, 7 plays, 2:29)

WKU — Porter, 67, run (James kick), 4:53 (71 yds, 2 plays, 0:53)

WKU — Porter, 46, run (James kick), 3:43 (46 yds, 1 play, 0:08)

Attendance: 3,108

INDIVIDUAL STAT LEADERS

Rushing

WKU — Brian Porter 24-213 / 4 TDs

FIU — Rashod Smith 29-131 / 1 TD

Passing

WKU — Justin Haddix 14-9-0 / 117 yds

FIU — Josh Padrick 44-27-3 / 286 yds / 1 TD

Receiving

WKU — Maurice Perkins 2-56

Lerron Moore 2-20

Cory Clemons 2-17

Ross Cassity 2-15

FIU — Cory McKinney 8-69 / 1 TD

Harold Leath 6-95

Punting

WKU — Brian Claybourn 2 / 46.0

FIU — Doug Jones 2 / 36.0

Tackles

WKU — Antonio Thomas 7-2 / 9

FIU — Johnathan Sturup 7-2 / 9

Nick Turnbull 7-2 / 9

The Last Playoff Game

NCAA I-AA QUARTERFINALS

#2 Wofford 34, #8 WKU 17

December 6, 2003 / Spartanburg, S.C.

	WKU	WOF
First Downs	15	19
Rush-Pass-Pen	7-8-0	17-2-0
Rush Atts-Net Yards	31-125	72-311
Net Yards Passing	220	20
Att-Comp-Int	36-16-3	4-2-1
Total Plays-Net Yards	67-345	76-331
Avg. Gain Per Play	5.1	4.4
Fumbles-Lost	1-1	1-0
Penalties-Yards	5-35	1-10
Interceptions-Yards	1-0	3-62
Punts-Average	5-35.4	5-31.4
Punt Returns-Yards	0-0	3-14
Kickoff Returns-Yards	6-112	3-29
Possession Time	26:57	33:03
Third-Down Conversions	8-17	6-15

WKU (9-4)	7-3-0-7	17
Wofford (12-1)	21-0-0-13	34

SCORING SUMMARY

1st Quarter

WKU — Shannon Hayes, 82, pass from Justin Haddix (Matt Lange kick), 14:40 (82 yds, 1 play, 0:20)

WOF — Jeff Zolman, 5, run (kick failed), 10:56 (70 yds, 11 plays, 3:44)

WOF — JR. McNair, 1, run (Kevious Johnson run), 6:57 (32 yds, 7 plays, 2:30)

WOF — Zolman, 1, run (Nick Robinson kick), 2:58 (48 yds, 6 plays, 2:23)

2nd Quarter

WKU — Lange, 22, field goal, 6:58 (69 yds, 14 plays, 7:17)

4th Quarter

WOF — Zolman, 1, run (kick blocked), 13:32 (72 yds, 16 plays, 8:05)

WKU — Lerron Moore, 1, run (Lange kick), 7:30 (79 yds, 16 plays, 6:02)

WOF — Curtis Nash, 26, run (Robinson kick), 5:26 (43 yds, 5 plays, 2:04)

Attendance: 7,500

INDIVIDUAL STAT LEADERS

Rushing

WKU — Lerron Moore 21-77 / 1 TD

WOF — Jeff Zolman 21-94 / 3 TDs

J.R. McNair 22-88 / 1 TD

Kevious Johnson 16-86

Passing

WKU — Justin Haddix 35-15-3 / 195 yds / 1 TD

WOF — Jeff Zolman 2-2-0 / 20 yds

Receiving

WKU — Casey Rooney 8-70

Shannon Hayes 2-86 / 1 TD

WOF — Shiel Wood 2-20

Punting

WKU — Brian Claybourn 5 / 35.4

Depth Charts

Western Kentucky Hilltoppers

Multiple OFFENSE	
WR	15 — Curtis Hamilton (6-1, 175, Fr., West Paducah, Ky.) 84 — Rannen Roberson (6-0, 185, So., Elkhart, Ind.)
TE	44 — Karl Phillips (6-3, 235, So., Kissimmee, Fla.) 94 — Chris Brunemann (6-3, 240, So., Covington, Ky.) 88 — Jared Holland (6-4, 230, Fr., Franklin, Tenn.)
LT	71 — Buster Ashley (6-4, 300, Sr., Owensboro, Ky.) 76 — Zach Thuney (6-4, 270, Fr., Dayton, Ohio)
LG	61 — Tyrone Mareko (6-3, 310, Jr., American Samoa) 74 — Sean Pugh (6-0, 315, Jr., Huber Heights, Ohio)
C	54 — Erik Losey (6-2, 285, Jr., Hixson, Tenn.) 72 — Chris Sullivan (5-11, 245, So., Louisville, Ky.)
RG	75 — Ryan Thomas (6-3, 300, Sr., Orchard Park, N.Y.) 52 — Greg Ryan (6-3, 250, Fr., Murray, Ky.)
RT	56 — Joe Dolchan (6-3, 265, So., Dexter, Ky.) 77 — Chaz Stradley (6-6, 260, Fr., Corbin, Ky.)
WR	85 — Maurice Perkins (5-9, 170, Jr., Indianapolis, Ind.) 86 — Cory Clemons (6-1, 210, Fr., Valdosta, Ga.)
QB	16 — Justin Haddix (6-1, 210, So., Jackson, Ky.) 3 — Blake Ladson (6-1, 175, So., Hopkinsville, Ky.)
FB	39 — Ross Cassity (6-2, 230, Fr., Versailles, Ky.) 46 — Eric Williams (5-9, 235, Fr., Dayton, Ohio)
RB	25 — Lerron Moore (5-10, 210, Jr., Columbus, Ohio) 23 — Brian Porter (5-9, 180, So., Germantown, Md.) 36 — Stephen Willis (5-10, 195, Fr., Indianapolis, Ind.)
3-4 DEFENSE	
LE	99 — Charlie Phillips (6-3, 250, Jr., Kissimmee, Fla.) 91 — Dan Dinsmore (6-3, 235, So., Hamilton, Ohio) 58 — Josh Johnson (6-3, 240, So., Franklin, Tenn.)
NT	93 — Joe Woolridge (6-1, 305, Jr., Greenwood, S.C.) 90 — Ross Dickens (6-3, 245, So., Pelham, Ala.) 53 — Dusty Bear (6-3, 255, Fr., Osprey, Fla.)
RE	96 — Daniel Williams (6-2, 265, Jr., Baxley, Ga.) 48 — Evan Brewer (6-2, 230, Fr., Bowling Green, Ky.)
OLB	11 — Brandon Smith (6-2, 220, Jr., Stanford, Ky.) 19 — Sam Sexton (6-3, 215, So., Ferguson, Ky.)
ILB	9 — Charles Thompson (6-1, 240, Sr., Louisville, Ky.) 32 — Jon Hedges (6-1, 225, So., Murray, Ky.) 29 — Jami DeBerry (6-0, 195, Sr., Franklin, Ky.)
ILB	7 — Deonté Smith (6-1, 210, Sr., Louisville, Ky.) 35 — Johnathan Carter (6-2, 210, So., Murfreesboro, Tenn.)
OLB	31 — Getty Cavitt (6-1, 240, Sr., Owensboro, Ky.) 59 — Deion Holts (6-2, 250, Jr., Bowling Green, Ky.)
LCB	6 — Antonio Thomas (6-2, 200, Sr., Louisville, Ky.) 2 — Kareem Garibaldi (6-0, 185, Jr., Tampa, Fla.)
SS	21 — Dennis Mitchell (5-8, 180, Jr., Indianapolis, Ind.) 20 — Scott Greschel (5-9, 195, So., Fairdale, Ky.)
FS	10 — Marion Rumph (6-2, 190, Fr., Bradenton, Fla.) 24 — Brandon Mason (6-2, 180, Fr., Nicholasville, Ky.)
RCB	14 — Artis Neal (5-11, 170, Jr., Apopka, Fla.) 5 — Bo Smith (5-10, 190, Fr., Rockledge, Fla.)
SPECIAL TEAMS	
PK	83 — Chris James (6-0, 180, Fr., Fayetteville, Ga.) 79 — Tanner Siewart (5-10, 175, Fr., Robards, Ky.)
P/KO	8 — Brian Claybourn (6-1, 185, Sr., Evansville, Ind.)
LS	32 — Jon Hedges (6-1, 225, So., Murray, Ky.)
H	8 — Brian Claybourn (6-1, 185, Sr., Evansville, Ind.)
KOR	21 — Dennis Mitchell (5-8, 180, Jr., Indianapolis, Ind.) 23 — Brian Porter (5-9, 180, So., Germantown, Md.) 5 — Bo Smith (5-10, 190, Fr., Rockledge, Fla.)
PR	21 — Dennis Mitchell (5-8, 180, Jr., Indianapolis, Ind.)

Sam Houston State Bearkats

Multiple One-Back OFFENSE	
WR	17 — Jarrod Fuller (5-8, 170, Sr., Jacksonville, Texas) 7 — Bernard Campbell (5-8, 170, Sr., Duncanville, Texas)
FL	83 — Vincent Cartwright (6-4, 215, Sr., Shelbyville, Texas) 80 — Corey Zeno (5-9, 180, Sr., DeSoto, Texas)
TE	81 — Corey Roberts (6-5, 295, Jr., Carthage, Texas) 84 — Blake Martin (6-3, 245, Fr., Hemphill, Texas)
LT	73 — Lance Hancock (6-6, 275, So., Deer Park, Texas) 70 — Brandon Hale (6-4, 260, Fr., Grand Prairie, Texas)
LG	62 — Brennan Williams (6-0, 270, Fr., Decatur, Texas) 71 — Ben Savell (6-2, 285, Fr., Madisonville, Texas)
C	55 — Stephen Izevbizua (6-1, 315, Sr., Houston, Texas) 61 — Ryan Dretke (6-1, 250, Fr., Huntsville, Texas)
RG	77 — Brock McDaniel (6-2, 270, Fr., Pineland, Texas) 79 — Alex Ruthstrom (6-3, 295, Fr., Lake Jackson, Texas)
RT	78 — Chris Louvier (6-5, 295, Sr., Dayton, Texas) 72 — Stephen Akindona (6-4, 280, So., Missouri City, Texas)
WR	21 — Jason Mathenia (6-0, 195, Jr., Copperas Cove, Texas) 22 — Cory Crawford (6-1, 200, Sr., Houston, Texas)
QB	11 — Dustin Long (6-3, 210, Sr., Groves, Texas) 14 — Noah Allen (6-3, 219, So., Pearland, Texas)
RB	45 — Stevie Smith (5-11, 190, Jr., Sweeny, Texas) 28 — Jason Godfrey (6-0, 215, Jr., Tomball, Texas) 1 — Robert Garmon (6-0, 185, Sr., Tyler, Texas)
4-2-5 DEFENSE	
LE	91 — Steven Hagler (6-3, 255, Sr., Brackettville, Texas) 90 — David Branch (6-2, 265, So., Houston, Texas)
LT	51 — Jeff Mayhew (6-4, 290, Jr., Nederland, Texas) 93 — Jeremy Wilson (6-1, 280, Fr., Wilmer-Hutchins, Texas)
RT	97 — John Griffin (6-3, 265, Jr., Klein, Texas) 74 — Brandon Villanueva (6-0, 295, So., Austin, Texas)
RE	94 — Aaron Ivey (6-3, 255, So., San Antonio, Texas) 99 — Ed Jackson (6-3, 240, So., LaMarque, Texas)
LB	52 — Marcus Mikulec (6-2, 245, Jr., Canton, Texas) 30 — Ayo Akindona (6-2, 210, Fr., Missouri City, Texas)
LB	48 — Michael Saumell-Baston (6-0, 245, Sr., Conroe, Texas) 57 — Dayton Freeman (6-0, 230, Sr., Buffalo, Texas)
LCB	3 — Greg Brown (5-11, 190, Jr., Killeen, Texas) 26 — Ronnie Johnson (5-10, 175, Jr., LaMarque, Texas)
SS	19 — Braylon Linnear (5-10, 190, So., Dallas, Texas) 24 — Tony Jones (5-10, 205, So., Cypress, Texas)
FS	29 — Chadd Oliphant (6-0, 190, So., Texas City, Texas) 40 — Robert Herron (6-1, 190, Jr., San Antonio, Texas)
SS	32 — Pau IDonelson (6-0, 210, Sr., New Waverly, Texas) 38 — D.D. Terry (6-2, 188, So., Willis, Texas)
RCB	2 — Mark Hughes (5-9, 175, Sr., Arlington, Texas) 25 — Derrick Harris (5-10, 180, So., Waco, Texas)
SPECIAL TEAMS	
PK	3 — Joey Price (5-8, 180, Sr., Port Neches, Texas) 18 — Lance Garner (6-0, 185, Jr., Copperas Cove, Texas)
P	23 — Curtis Parks (6-2, 200, So., Nederland, Texas)
LS	56 — Patrick Holland (6-2, 220, Jr., Waco, Texas)
H	6 — Travis Tobaben (6-3, 215, Sr., Red Oak, Texas)
KOR	1 — Robert Garmon (6-0, 185, Sr., Tyler, Texas) 45 — Stevie Smith (5-11, 190, Jr., Sweeny, Texas)
PR	7 — Bernard Campbell (5-8, 170, Sr., Duncanville, Texas)

The Hilltoppers In The Final Regular-Season Polls

The Sports Network

1. Southern Illinois (10-1)
2. Furman (9-2)
3. WESTERN KENTUCKY (9-2)
4. Georgia Southern (9-2)
5. New Hampshire (9-2)
6. William & Mary (9-2)
7. Montana (9-2)
8. James Madison (9-2)
9. Sam Houston State (9-2)
10. Delaware (8-3)
11. Hampton (10-1)
12. Harvard (10-0)
13. Jacksonville State (9-1)
14. Eastern Washington (8-3)
15. Northwestern (La.) State (8-3)
16. Lehigh (9-2)
17. Cal Poly (9-2)
18. Wofford (8-3)
19. Alabama State (8-1)
20. Southern (8-2)
21. Pennsylvania (8-2)
22. Coastal Carolina (10-1)
23. South Carolina State (9-2)
24. North Dakota State (8-3)
25. Lafayette (8-3)

Others Receiving Votes:

Northern Iowa, Portland State, Villanova, Colgate, Massachusetts, Southeastern Louisiana, Stephen F. Austin, Montana State, Northeastern, Arkansas-Pine Bluff, Monmouth, Maine — 37 teams received votes.

Week-by-Week with WKU
in The Sports Network

Preseason	13th
Week 1 (Sept. 6)	11th
Week 2 (Sept. 13)	11th
Week 3 (Sept. 20)	6th
Week 4 (Sept. 27)	6th
Week 5 (Oct. 4)	6th
Week 6 (Oct. 11)	4th
Week 7 (Oct. 18)	10th
Week 8 (Oct. 25)	7th
Week 9 (Nov. 1)	5th
Week 10 (Nov. 8)	5th
Week 11 (Nov. 15)	3rd
Week 12 (Nov. 22)	3rd

ESPN / USA Today

1. Southern Illinois (10-1)
2. Furman (9-2)
3. WESTERN KENTUCKY (9-2)
4. Georgia Southern (9-2)
5. New Hampshire (9-2)
6. William & Mary (9-2)
7. Montana (9-2)
8. James Madison (9-2)
9. Sam Houston State (9-2)
10. Delaware (8-3)
11. Hampton (10-1)
12. Harvard (10-0)
13. Eastern Washington (8-3)
14. Jacksonville State (9-1)
15. Northwestern (La.) State (8-3)
16. Cal Poly (9-2)
17. Lehigh (9-2)
18. Wofford (8-3)
19. Alabama State (8-1)
20. Southern (8-2)
21. Pennsylvania (8-2)
22. South Carolina State (9-2)
23. North Dakota State (8-3)
24. Lafayette (8-3)
25. Coastal Carolina (10-1)

Others Receiving Votes:

Northern Iowa, Portland State, Villanova, Colgate, Massachusetts, Southeastern Louisiana, Stephen F. Austin, Montana State, Northeastern, Arkansas-Pine Bluff, Monmouth, Maine — 35 teams received votes.

Week-by-Week with WKU
in ESPN/USA Today Poll

Preseason	14th
Week 1 (Sept. 6)	no poll
Week 2 (Sept. 13)	10th
Week 3 (Sept. 20)	6th
Week 4 (Sept. 27)	6th
Week 5 (Oct. 4)	6th
Week 6 (Oct. 11)	4th
Week 7 (Oct. 18)	11th
Week 8 (Oct. 25)	8th
Week 9 (Nov. 1)	5th
Week 10 (Nov. 8)	5th
Week 11 (Nov. 15)	3rd
Week 12 (Nov. 22)	3rd

Hansen's Football Gazette

1. Southern Illinois (10-1)
2. Harvard (10-0)
3. William & Mary (9-2)
4. Furman (9-2)
5. Georgia Southern (9-2)
6. James Madison (9-2)
7. Delaware (8-3)
8. WESTERN KENTUCKY (9-2)
9. New Hampshire (9-2)
10. Sam Houston State (9-2)
11. Montana (9-2)
12. Eastern Washington (8-3)
13. Hampton (10-1)
14. Cal Poly (9-2)
15. North Dakota State (8-3)
16. Wofford (8-3)
17. Villanova (6-5)
18. Northwestern (La.) State (8-3)
19. Northern Iowa (7-4)
20. Portland State (7-4)
21. Jacksonville State (9-1)
22. Lafayette (8-3)
23. Lehigh (9-2)
24. Coastal Carolina (10-1)
25. Pennsylvania (8-2)
26. South Carolina State (9-2)
27. Massachusetts (6-5)
28. Southern (8-2)
29. Alabama State (8-1)
30. Bucknell (7-4)
31. Stephen F. Austin (6-5)
32. UC Davis (6-4)
33. Hofstra (5-6)
34. Appalachian State (6-5)
35. Murray State (7-4)
36. Alabama A&M (7-4)
37. Southwest Missouri State (6-5)
38. Maine (5-6)
39. Northeastern (5-6)
40. Bethune-Cookman (6-4)

Week-by-Week with WKU
in The Football Gazette Poll

Preseason	14th
Week 1 (Sept. 6)	12th
Week 2 (Sept. 13)	11th
Week 3 (Sept. 20)	6th
Week 4 (Sept. 27)	6th
Week 5 (Oct. 4)	6th
Week 6 (Oct. 11)	4th
Week 7 (Oct. 18)	tie — 12th
Week 8 (Oct. 25)	10th
Week 9 (Nov. 1)	10th
Week 10 (Nov. 8)	8th
Week 11 (Nov. 15)	8th
Week 12 (Nov. 22)	8th

WKU And Its '04 Regular-Season Opposition Among the NCAA I-AA Stat Leaders

TEAM

Rushing Offense (yards per game)

1. Georgia Southern	373.00
3. Southern Illinois	282.27
12. Western Kentucky	237.45
27. Northern Iowa	203.73
37. Southwest Missouri State	170.82
Youngstown State	170.82
48. Western Illinois	155.55
51. Illinois State	154.27
71. Eastern Kentucky	136.55
78. Indiana State	131.00

Passing Offense (yards per game)

1. Southeastern Louisiana	408.0
38. Illinois State	226.3
41. Southern Illinois	224.1
43. Western Illinois	220.7
51. Indiana State	209.7
70. Eastern Kentucky	187.2
71. Northern Iowa	186.2
75. Southwest Missouri State	177.6
80. Youngstown State	170.7
85. Western Kentucky	163.7

Passing Efficiency Offense (rating points)

1. Georgia Southern	182.86
2. Southern Illinois	173.61
12. Northern Iowa	149.75
22. Western Kentucky	140.20
36. Youngstown State	127.43
51. Western Illinois	119.71
54. Southwest Missouri State	119.12
73. Eastern Kentucky	112.95
88. Indiana State	105.75
89. Illinois State	105.60

Total Offense (yards per game)

1. Southeastern Louisiana	537.09
2. Southern Illinois	506.36
27. Western Kentucky	401.18
34. Northern Iowa	389.91
40. Illinois State	381.09
43. Western Illinois	376.27
67. Southwest Missouri State	348.45
74. Youngstown State	341.55
75. Indiana State	340.73
83. Eastern Kentucky	323.73

Net Punting (average per play)

1. Northern Arizona	44.88
2. Western Kentucky	40.30
17. Illinois State	36.07
18. Youngstown State	36.06
21. Southern Illinois	35.86
30. Southwest Missouri State	34.81
34. Eastern Kentucky	34.60
39. Northern Iowa	34.45
85. Western Illinois	31.49
100. Indiana State	29.90

Punt Returns (yards per return)

1. Jacksonville State	19.04
13. Eastern Kentucky	12.75
28. Western Kentucky	11.32
29. Southwest Missouri State	11.17
32. Indiana State	10.70
37. Illinois State	10.31
50. Western Illinois	9.00
64. Southern Illinois	8.47
84. Youngstown State	7.13
85. Northern Iowa	7.08

Kickoff Returns (yards per return)

1. Hampton	29.45
8. Southwest Missouri State	23.32
17. Eastern Kentucky	21.97
19. Western Illinois	21.76
26. Indiana State	21.13
36. Illinois State	20.88
42. Southern Illinois	20.30
50. Western Kentucky	20.11
73. Youngstown State	19.02
83. Northern Iowa	18.48

Scoring Offense (points per game)

1. Georgia Southern	49.18
3. Southern Illinois	43.64
26. Northern Iowa	31.91
35. Western Kentucky	29.64
39. Western Illinois	28.27
46. Southwest Missouri State	26.82
51. Eastern Kentucky	26.36
59. Illinois State	25.64
67. Youngstown State	24.55
85. Indiana State	22.09

Rushing Defense (yards per game)

1. Northwestern (La.) State	78.2
8. Southern Illinois	99.0
15. Northern Iowa	109.3
39. Western Kentucky	134.1
45. Illinois State	138.5
52. Eastern Kentucky	143.9
93. Youngstown State	191.9
102. Indiana State	216.1
105. Southwest Missouri State	218.8
117. Western Illinois	288.3

Passing Defense (yards per game)

1. Valparaiso	128.82
11. Western Illinois	157.18
34. Southern Illinois	181.36
38. Youngstown State	186.09
54. Northern Iowa	195.73
62. Western Kentucky	200.36
63. Eastern Kentucky	201.45
70. Southwest Missouri State	204.55
99. Illinois State	229.91
104. Indiana State	231.73

Pass Efficiency Defense (rating points)

1. Coastal Carolina	82.72
3. Southern Illinois	90.61
19. Western Illinois	105.48
23. Eastern Kentucky	106.40
24. Western Kentucky	106.60
46. Northern Iowa	115.12
57. Youngstown State	118.11
75. Southwest Missouri State	123.24
111. Illinois State	146.20
112. Indiana State	146.63

Total Defense (yards per game)

1. Northwestern (La.) State	250.27
5. Southern Illinois	280.36
18. Northern Iowa	305.00
46. Western Kentucky	334.45
56. Eastern Kentucky	345.36
73. Illinois State	368.36
81. Youngstown State	378.00
104. Southwest Missouri State	423.36
111. Western Illinois	445.45
113. Indiana State	447.82

Scoring Defense (points per game)

1. Southern Illinois	11.2
2. Harvard	13.4
5. Western Kentucky	15.7
15. Northern Iowa	18.0
42. Eastern Kentucky	21.7
61. Youngstown State	24.7
89. Southwest Missouri State	29.5
94. Illinois State	32.0
110. Western Illinois	37.2
112. Indiana State	37.7

Turnover Margin (+/- per game)

1. Coastal Carolina	+2.00
7. Southern Illinois	+1.18
9. Northern Iowa	+1.00
12. Southwest Missouri State	+0.91
17. Western Kentucky	+0.82
23. Western Illinois	+0.55
43. Eastern Kentucky	+0.27
50. Indiana State	+0.18
71. Youngstown State	-0.18
117. Illinois State	-1.91

INDIVIDUAL

(ranked among top 50)

Rushing (yards per game)

1. Charles Anthony, Tennessee State	158.09
15. C.J. Hudson, ECU	110.18
18. Travis Glasford, WIU	108.00
19. Lerron Moore, WKU	107.78
27. Cody Pratt, SMS	101.45
31. Terrance Freeney, UNI	99.45
48. Brian Thompson, ILS	86.60

Passing Efficiency (rating points)

1. Erik Meyer, Eastern Washington	175.5
2. Joel Sambursky, SIU	175.3
4. Eric Sanders, UNI	162.9
21. Justin Haddix, WKU	137.3
23. Tom Zetts, YSU	135.6
42. Steve LaFalce, WIU	122.7

Total Offense (yards per game)

1. Martin Hankins, Southeastern La.	383.7
29. Yance Vaughn, ILS	227.2
46. Joel Sambursky, SIU	203.2
50. Phillip Johnson, INS	197.0

Receptions per Game

1. DaVon Fowlkes, Appalachian State	9.36
30. Steven Rush, SMS	5.60

Receiving Yards per Game

1. DaVon Fowlkes, Appalachian State	147.09
42. Brent Little, SIU	76.00
46. Steven Rush, SMS	74.10

Interceptions (interceptions per game)

1. Ahmad Treado, Southern	0.89
5. Darren Barnett, SMS	0.64
11. Antonio Thomas, WKU	0.55
Pierre Wright, ECU	0.55
22. Jovon Lewis, SMS	0.45
35. Dre Dokes, UNI	0.44
Marlon McLaughlin, WIU	0.44

Punting (average per kick)

1. Paul Ernster, Northern Arizona	47.84
3. Ryan Hoffman, ILS	43.87
4. Brian Claybourn, WKU	43.70
21. Cory Henke, UNI	40.56
25. Zach Kettelkamp, SIU	40.00
34. Phil Kuhl, ECU	39.21
Jon Scifres, SMS	39.21
42. Joe Bishop, YSU	38.26

Punt Returns (average per return)

1. Craig Agee, Jacksonville State	21.18
20. Dennis Mitchell, WKU	11.38
23. Allen Evans, ECU	10.45
24. Joe Walkins, ILS	10.41
29. James Norris, WIU	10.00
40. Justin Surrency, UNI	8.93

Kickoff Returns (average per return)

1. Jerome Mathis, Hampton	34.38
8. Kyle Barber, ECU	27.56
22. James Norris, WIU	25.45
25. Steven Rush, SMS	25.10
31. Therral Hatfield, INS	23.84
35. Richard Carter, UNI	23.59
49. Matt Rycraft, YSU	22.14

Field Goals (field goals made per game)

1. Joe Johnson, Weber State	1.55
2. Kyle Hooper, INS	1.45
5. Brian Wingert, UNI	1.40
7. Jon Scifres, SMS	1.36
23. Craig Coffin, SIU	1.09
28. Justin Langan, WIU	1.00
Nick Terracina, YSU	1.00
43. Chris James, WKU	0.89

Scoring (points per game)

1. Chaz Williams, Georgia Southern	12.73
14. Craig Coffin, SIU	8.91
21. Travis Glasford, WIU	8.40
25. Brian Wingert, UNI	8.20
26. Brandon Jacobs, SIU	8.18
37. Lerron Moore, WKU	7.33
44. Jon Scifres, SMS	7.18
45. Brian Porter, WKU	7.09
Arkee Whitlock, SIU	7.09

All-Purpose Running (yards per game)

1. DaVon Fowlkes, Appalachian State	210.27
11. Travis Glasford, WIU	154.40
12. James Norris, WIU	154.09
26. Steven Rush, SMS	140.30
40. C.J. Hudson, ECU	126.82

The 2004 Hilltoppers — TEAM SUPERLATIVES — The 2004 Hilltoppers

Team Highs

Points	58 vs. Concord (W.Va.), 9/11
TDs Scored	8 vs. Concord (W.Va.), 9/11
First Downs	26 vs. Western Illinois, 11/13
	26 at Southwest Missouri State, 11/6
	26 vs. Concord (W.Va.), 9/11
Rush	24 vs. Western Illinois, 11/13

Pass 9 at Southern Illinois, 10/16

9 at Northern Iowa, 10/9

Penalty 2 vs. Indiana State, 10/23

2 vs. Concord (W.Va.), 9/11

Rush Attempts 69 at Southwest Missouri State, 11/6 (336 yds)

Rush Yards 473 vs. Western Illinois, 11/13 (66 atts)

Pass Attempts 26 at Eastern Kentucky, 9/18 (26-13-1 / 179 yds)

Pass Completions 16 at Southern Illinois, 10/16 (25-16-2 / 202 yds)

Pass Yards 276 vs. Indiana State, 10/23 (18-12-0)

Offensive Plays 82 at Southwest Missouri State, 11/6 (461 yds)

Yards 535 vs. Western Illinois, 11/13 (80 plays)

Average Gain/Play 9.9 vs. Youngstown State, 10/2 (456 yds / 46 plays)

Penalties 12 vs. Illinois State, 10/30 (102 yds)

Penalty Yards 102 vs. Illinois State, 10/30 (12 pens)

Fumbles Lost 2 at Southern Illinois, 10/16

2 at Eastern Kentucky, 9/18

3rd Down Conversions 68.8% (11-16) at Southwest Missouri State, 11/6

Possession Time 39:59 at Southwest Missouri State, 11/6

Team Lows

Points	10 at Southern Illinois, 10/16
TDs Scored	1 at Southern Illinois, 10/16

First Downs 13 at Eastern Kentucky, 9/18

13 at Kansas State, 9/4

Rush 4 at Kansas State, 9/4

Pass 1 vs. Western Illinois, 11/13

Penalty 0 at Florida International, 11/20

0 at Southwest Missouri State, 11/6

0 at Northern Iowa, 10/9

0 vs. Youngstown State, 10/2

0 at Eastern Kentucky, 9/18

Rush Attempts 25 at Kansas State, 9/4 (77 yds)

Rush Yards 77 at Kansas State, 9/4 (25 atts)

Pass Attempts 11 vs. Youngstown State, 10/2 (11-8-1 / 182 yds)

Pass Completions 6 vs. Western Illinois, 11/13 (14-6-0 / 62 yds)

Pass Yards 62 vs. Western Illinois, 11/13 (14-6-0)

Offensive Plays 46 vs. Youngstown State, 10/2 (456 yds)

46 at Kansas State, 9/4 (259 yds)

Yards 243 vs. Illinois State, 10/30 (63 plays)

Average Gain/Play 3.9 vs. Illinois State, 10/30 (243 yds / 63 plays)

Penalties 3 at Northern Iowa, 10/9 (35 yds)

Penalty Yards 33 at Florida International, 11/20 (4 pens)

Fumbles Lost 0 vs. Illinois State, 10/30

0 vs. Concord (W.Va.), 9/11

0 at Kansas State, 9/4

3rd Down Conversions 12.5% (1-8) vs. Youngstown State, 10/2

Possession Time 20:55 at Kansas State, 9/4

Opponents

38 by Southern Illinois, 10/16

5 by Southern Illinois, 10/16

27 by Kansas State, 9/4

17 by Southern Illinois, 10/16

17 by Kansas State, 9/4

15 by Florida International, 11/20

4 by Concord (W.Va.), 9/11

60 by Kansas State, 9/4 (306 yds)

310 by Southern Illinois, 10/16 (54 atts)

44 by Florida International, 11/20 (44-27-3 / 286)

44 by Youngstown State, 10/2 (44-29-2 / 286 yds)

29 by Youngstown State, 10/2 (44-29-2 / 286 yds)

286 by Florida International, 11/20 (44-27-3)

286 by Youngstown State, 10/2 (44-29-2)

94 by Youngstown State, 10/2 (437 yds)

502 by Kansas State, 9/4 (81 plays)

6.6 by Southern Illinois, 10/16 (473 yds / 72 plays)

9 by Youngstown State, 10/2 (69 yds)

69 by Youngstown State, 10/2 (9 pens)

2 by Youngstown State, 10/2

2 by Concord (W.Va.), 9/11

72.2% (13-18) by Kansas State, 9/4

39:05 by Kansas State, 9/4

Opponents

0 by Concord (W.Va.), 9/11

The 2004 Hilltoppers — INDIVIDUAL SUPERLATIVES — The 2004 Hilltoppers

Category WKU Hilltoppers

Long Rush	67-TD — Brian Porter at Florida International, 11/20
Long Pass	62 — Justin Haddix to Maurice Perkins at Northern Iowa, 10/9
Long Punt	61 — Brian Claybourn at Eastern Kentucky, 9/18
Long Punt Return	68-TD — Dennis Mitchell at Northern Iowa, 10/9
Long KO Return	66 — Brian Porter vs. Illinois State, 10/30
Long Pass Int. Ret.	48-TD — Deonté Smith vs. Youngstown State, 10/2
Long Fumble Ret	0 — Evan Brewer vs. Indiana State, 10/23
	0 — Dennis Mitchell vs. Youngstown State, 10/2
	0 — Deonté Smith vs. Youngstown State, 10/2
	0 — Brandon Smith vs. Concord (W.Va.), 9/11
	0 — Joe Woolridge vs. Concord (W.Va.), 9/11
	0 — Charles Thompson at Kansas State, 9/4
Long FG	44 — Chris James vs. Western Illinois, 11/13
Long FG Att	47 — Chris James at Florida International, 11/20 (no good)
	47 — Tanner Stewart at Eastern Kentucky, 9/18 (no good)
Rush Yards	219 — Lerron Moore vs. Western Illinois, 11/13 (34 atts)
Rush Attempts	34 — Lerron Moore vs. Western Illinois, 11/13 (219 yds)
Pass Yards	276 — Justin Haddix vs. Indiana State, 10/23 (18-12-0)
Pass Attempts	26 — Justin Haddix at Eastern Kentucky, 9/18 (26-13-1 / 179 yds)
Pass Comps	16 — Justin Haddix at Southern Illinois, 10/16 (25-16-2 / 202 yds)
Receiving Yards	141 — Maurice Perkins at Northern Iowa, 10/9 (7 catches)
Receptions	7 — Maurice Perkins at Northern Iowa, 10/9 (141 yds)
Punts	7 — Brian Claybourn at Eastern Kentucky, 9/18 (37.9 avg)
Punt Average	52.0 — Brian Claybourn at Kansas State, 9/4 (4 punts, 208 yds)
Punt Returns	5 — Dennis Mitchell vs. Illinois State, 10/30 (81 yds)
Punt Return Yards	81 — Dennis Mitchell vs. Illinois State, 10/30 (5 rets)
Kickoff Returns	7 — Dennis Mitchell at Southern Illinois, 10/16 (137 yds)
Kickoff Ret. Yards	137 — Dennis Mitchell at Southern Illinois, 10/16 (7 rets)
Total Offense Atts	36 — Justin Haddix at Southern Illinois, 10/16 (211 yds)
Total Offense Yds	302 — Justin Haddix vs. Indiana State, 10/23 (21 atts)
All-Purpose Yds	226 — Lerron Moore vs. Western Illinois, 11/13 (219 rush, 7 rec)
Points Scored	24 — Brian Porter at Florida International, 11/20 (4 TDs)
	24 — Lerron Moore vs. Western Illinois, 11/13 (4 TDs)

Opponents

32 — Darren Sproles, Kansas State, 9/4
83-TD — A.J. Porter to Steven Rush, SMS, 11/6
56 — Jon Scifres, Southwest Missouri State, 11/6
28 — Dre Dokes, Northern Iowa, 10/9
46 — Reggie Gray, Western Illinois, 11/13
37 — Darren Barnett, Southwest Missouri State, 11/6
3 — Alexis Moreland, Southern Illinois, 10/16
53 — Justin Langan, Western Illinois, 11/13
53 — Justin Langan, Western Illinois, 11/13 (good)
221 — Darren Sproles, Kansas State, 9/4 (42 atts)
42 — Darren Sproles, Kansas State, 9/4 (221 yds)
286 — Josh Padrick, Florida International, 11/20 (44-27-3)
286 — Tom Zetts, Youngstown State, 10/2 (40-28-2)
44 — Josh Padrick, Florida International, 11/20 (44-27-3 / 286 yds)
28 — Tom Zetts, Youngstown State, 10/2 (40-28-2 / 286 yds)
151 — Steven Rush, Southwest Missouri State, 11/6 (10 catches)
10 — Steven Rush, Southwest Missouri State, 11/6 (151 yds)
10 — Sam Logan, Indiana State, 10/23 (114 yds)
8 — Kris Coffee, Western Illinois, 11/13 (31.9 avg)
8 — Brandon Anweiler, Indiana State, 10/23 (37.9 avg)
47.2 — Jon Scifres, SMS, 11/6 (6 punts, 283 yds)
3 — Courtney Reese, Indiana State, 10/23 (27 yds)
28 — Dre Dokes, Northern Iowa, 10/9 (2 rets)
6 — Therral Hatfield, Indiana State, 10/23 (157 yds)
157 — Therral Hatfield, Indiana State, 10/23 (6 rets)
49 — Tom Zetts, Youngstown State, 10/2 (281 yds)
288 — Josh Padrick, Florida International, 11/20 (47 atts)
221 — Darren Sproles, Kansas State, 9/4 (221 rush)
18 — Brandon Jacobs, Southern Illinois, 10/16 (3 TDs)

The 2004 Hilltoppers — Game-By-Game Individual Stat Leaders

	Rushing (Att-Yds / TD-Lg)	Passing (Att-Com-Int-Yds / TD-Lg)	Receiving (Catch-Yds / TD-Lg)	Tackles (UT-AT / Tot)
at Kansas State	Lerron Moore (15-63 / 1-25)	Justin Haddix (21-10-0-182 / 1-38)	Maurice Perkins (5-126 / 0-38)	Charles Thompson (8-5 / 13)
Concord (W.Va.)	Stephen Willis (21-156 / 2-24)	Haddix (11-6-0-87 / 1-33)	Perkins (4-61 / 1-33)	Evan Brewer (4-2 / 6)
				Getty Cavitt (1-5 / 6)
at Eastern Kentucky	Moore (26-113 / 3-25)	Haddix (26-13-1-179 / 0-33)	Aaron Scott (3-32 / 0-13)	Thompson (4-14 / 18)
			Perkins (3-25 / 0-18)	
Youngstown State	Moore (17-173 / 1-50)	Haddix (10-7-1-172 / 1-54)	Cory Clemons (3-78 / 0-54)	Brandon Smith (8-4 / 12)
				Deonté Smith (6-6 / 12)
				Thompson (3-9 / 12)
at #21 Northern Iowa	Moore (13-93 / 0-45)	Haddix (15-11-0-192 / 0-62)	Perkins (7-141 / 0-62)	D. Smith (8-2 / 10)
at #1 Southern Illinois	Brian Porter (17-92 / 1-26)	Haddix (25-16-2-202 / 0-23)	Scott (5-68 / 0-21)	Marion Rumph (8-6 / 14)
Indiana State	Moore (16-65 / 1-16)	Haddix (18-12-0-276 / 1-53)	Perkins (4-108 / 0-52)	Thompson (5-6 / 11)
Illinois State	Moore (19-56 / 0-13)	Haddix (22-13-1-140 / 2-34)	Perkins (2-55 / 0-34)	D. Smith (9-4 / 13)
			Curtis Hamilton (2-34 / 0-27)	Cavitt (6-7 / 13)
			Ross Cassity (2-19 / 0-12)	
at SMS	Willis (32-178 / 2-26)	Haddix (13-9-4-125 / 0-30)	Brian Porter (2-0 / 0-2)	D. Smith (4-3 / 7)
			Perkins (4-49 / 0-26)	B. Smith (1-6 / 7)
Western Illinois	Moore (34-219 / 4-22)	Haddix (14-6-0-62 / 0-15)	Perkins (2-15 / 0-10)	D. Smith (5-6 / 11)
at Fla. International	Brian Porter (24-213 / 4-67)	Haddix (14-9-0-117 / 0-29)	Perkins (2-56 / 0-29)	Antonio Thomas (7-2 / 9)
			Lerron Moore (2-20 / 0-10)	
			Clemons (2-17 / 0-12)	
			Cassity (2-15 / 0-11)	

The 2004 Hilltoppers — Game-by-Game Team Statistics

Team	First Downs Total / Ru-Pa-Pe	Rushing Att-Yds / TD-Lg	Passing Att-Com-Int-Yds / TD-Lg	Tot Off Att-Yds	Fum-Lost	Pen-Yds	Punts-Avg
#13 W K U	17 / 4-8-1	25-77 / 1-25	21-10-0-182 / 1-38	46-259	1-0	6-40	4-52.0
at Kansas State	27 / 17-10-0	60-306 / 3-32	21-14-0-196 / 0-35	81-502	3-1	6-35	1-38.0
#11 W K U	26 / 19-5-2	55-375 / 6-48	14-9-0-125 / 2-33	69-500	2-0	10-90	2-45.0
Concord (W.Va.)	13 / 3-6-4	24-41 / 0-13	32-15-5-141 / 0-48	56-182	3-2	6-50	4-41.2
#10 W K U	13 / 5-8-0	36-149 / 3-25	26-13-1-179 / 0-33	62-328	3-2	5-55	7-37.9
at Eastern Kentucky	15 / 8-7-0	42-104 / 1-22	37-16-7-156 / 0-27	79-260	0-0	6-26	7-36.7
#6 W K U	14 / 8-6-0	35-274 / 3-50	11-8-1-182 / 1-54	46-456	2-1	5-40	4-45.2
Youngstown State	24 / 10-14-0	50-151 / 1-21	44-29-2-286 / 2-35	94-437	4-2	9-69	5-38.0
#6 W K U	15 / 6-9-0	38-150 / 1-45	16-11-0-192 / 0-62	54-342	4-1	3-35	4-47.0
at #21 Northern Iowa	20 / 9-11-0	41-154 / 0-19	26-18-2-205 / 1-33	67-359	1-0	3-30	5-39.0
#4 W K U	19 / 9-9-1	36-150 / 1-26	25-16-2-202 / 0-23	61-352	2-2	5-45	4-38.0
at #1 Southern Illinois	27 / 17-10-0	54-310 / 3-24	18-13-1-163 / 2-39	72-473	1-0	2-10	1-39.0
#10 W K U	17 / 7-8-2	46-161 / 3-23	18-12-0-276 / 1-53	64-437	3-1	5-40	6-43.8
Indiana State	13 / 5-8-0	31-80 / 0-23	34-22-0-204 / 0-27	65-284	1-1	6-48	8-37.9
#7 W K U	16 / 7-8-1	40-84 / 1-13	23-14-1-159 / 2-34	63-243	0-0	12-102	5-48.2
Illinois State	21 / 5-14-2	38-82 / 1-10	37-20-1-255 / 2-36	75-337	1-0	7-65	5-43.0
#5 W K U	26 / 20-6-0	69-336 / 4-26	13-9-4-125 / 0-30	82-461	2-1	6-43	2-42.0
at SMS	9 / 2-7-0	19-31 / 0-20	33-17-0-217 / 3-83	52-248	0-0	1-4	6-47.2
#5 W K U	26 / 24-1-1	66-473 / 6-51	14-6-0-62 / 0-15	80-535	1-1	7-42	3-38.3
Western Illinois	12 / 5-6-1	30-83 / 0-18	31-12-1-95 / 0-19	61-178	0-0	4-30	9-33.3
#3 W K U	23 / 17-6-0	59-383 / 5-67	14-9-0-117 / 0-29	73-500	1-1	4-33	2-46.0
at Florida International	24 / 9-15-0	32-133 / 1-19	44-27-3-286 / 1-25	76-419	0-0	5-34	2-36.0

NCAA I-AA Playoff Schedule — Saturday, Nov. 27, 2004 — NCAA I-AA Playoff Schedule

Game	Site	Time (Central)
Eastern Washington (8-3) at No. 1 Southern Illinois (10-1)	Carbondale, Ill.	1:30 pm
Western Kentucky (9-2) at Sam Houston State (9-2)	Huntsville, Texas	1 pm
New Hampshire (9-2) at No. 4 Georgia Southern (9-2)	Statesboro, Ga.	5 pm
Northwestern (La.) State (8-3) at Montana (9-2)	Missoula, Mont.	1:05 pm
Hampton (10-1) at No. 3 William & Mary (9-2)	Williamsburg, Va.	11 am
Lafayette (8-3) at Delaware (8-3)	Newark, Del.	2 pm
Jacksonville State (9-1) at No. 2 Furman (9-2)	Greenville, S.C.	11 am
James Madison (9-2) at Lehigh (9-2)	Bethlehem, Pa.	11:30 am

The 2004 Hilltoppers — Selected Game-by-Game Individual Statistics

<u>RUSHING (Att-Yds / TD-Lg)</u>		<u>Moore</u>	<u>Porter</u>	<u>Willis</u>	<u>Haddix</u>	<u>Ladson</u>	<u>Wooldridge</u>				
at Kansas State	15-63 / 1-25	7-19 / 0-6	dnp	dnp	3-(-5) / 0-4	dnp	0-0 / 0-0				
Concord (W.Va.)	dnp	13-90 / 2-23	21-156 / 2-24	5-38 / 1-23	4-37 / 0-48	8-34 / 1-11					
at Eastern Kentucky	26-113 / 3-25	1-6 / 0-6	1-2 / 0-2	7-22 / 0-8	0-0 / 0-0	0-0 / 0-0					
Youngstown State	17-173 / 1-50	7-47 / 2-26	3-4 / 0-2	3-12 / 0-6	1-(-4) / 0-0	dnp					
at #21 Northern Iowa	13-93 / 0-45	14-19 / 1-9	3-26 / 0-23	7-6 / 0-7	0-0 / 0-0	dnp					
at #1 Southern Illinois	dnp	17-92 / 1-26	8-49 / 0-18	11-9 / 0-13	dnp	0-0 / 0-0					
Indiana State	16-65 / 1-16	12-32 / 1-10	13-25 / 1-7	3-26 / 0-23	1-14 / 0-14	0-0 / 0-0					
Illinois State	19-56 / 0-13	7-15 / 1-9	1-0 / 0-0	8-16 / 0-9	0-0 / 0-0	0-0 / 0-0					
at Southwest Missouri State	20-114 / 1-19	8-29 / 0-13	32-178 / 2-26	8-17 / 1-6	0-0 / 0-0	0-0 / 0-0					
Western Illinois	34-219 / 4-22	7-68 / 1-32	2-11 / 0-13	11-77 / 0-33	5-58 / 1-51	5-29 / 0-12					
at Florida International	19-74 / 0-16	24-213 / 4-67	dnp	9-48 / 1-10	1-31 / 0-31	2-7 / 0-5					
<u>PASSING (Att-Com-In-Yds / TD-Lg)</u>		<u>Haddix</u>	<u>Ladson</u>	<u>FGs — Siewart</u>		<u>James (FG - FGA / Distance)</u>					
at Kansas State	21-10-0-182 / 1-38	dnp	dnp	0-0	dnp	0-0					
Concord (W.Va.)	11-6-0-87 / 1-33	3-3-0-38 / 1-28	0-0-0-0 / 0-0	1-1 (19 good)	0-0	0-0					
at Eastern Kentucky	26-13-1-179 / 0-33	10-7-1-172 / 1-54	0-0-0-0 / 0-0	0-1 (47 no good)	dnp	dnp					
Youngstown State	10-7-1-172 / 1-54	1-1-0-10 / 0-10	0-0 / 0-0	dnp	3-3 (37 gd; 38 gd; 28 gd)	1-2 (21 good; 37 no good)					
at #21 Northern Iowa	15-11-0-192 / 0-62	25-16-2-202 / 0-23	dnp	dnp	1-1 (29 good)	1-1 (29 good)					
at #1 Southern Illinois	25-16-2-202 / 0-23	18-12-0-276 / 1-53	0-0 / 0-0	dnp	1-2 (31 good; 42 no good)	1-2 (31 good; 42 no good)					
Indiana State	18-12-0-276 / 1-53	22-13-1-140 / 2-34	1-1-0-19 / 0-19	dnp	0-0	0-0					
Illinois State	22-13-1-140 / 2-34	13-9-4-125 / 0-30	0-0 / 0-0	dnp	1-1 (44 good)	1-1 (44 good)					
at Southwest Missouri State	13-9-4-125 / 0-30	14-6-0-62 / 0-15	0-0 / 0-0	dnp	0-1 (47 no good)	0-1 (47 no good)					
Western Illinois	14-6-0-62 / 0-15	14-9-0-117 / 0-29	0-0 / 0-0	dnp							
at Florida International	14-9-0-117 / 0-29										
<u>RECEIVING (Rec-Yds / TD-Lg)</u>		<u>Perkins</u>	<u>Scott</u>	<u>Hamilton</u>	<u>Clemons</u>	<u>PUNT RETS — Mitchell (No-Yds / TD-Lg)</u>					
at Kansas State	5-126 / 0-38	0-0 / 0-0	0-0 / 0-0	0-0 / 0-0	dnp	0-0 / 0-0					
Concord (W.Va.)	4-61 / 1-33	1-6 / 0-6	1-28 / 1-28	dnp	2-25 / 0-17	2-25 / 0-17					
at Eastern Kentucky	3-25 / 0-18	3-32 / 0-13	2-59 / 0-33	dnp	4-8 / 0-4	4-8 / 0-4					
Youngstown State	1-48 / 0-48	0-0 / 0-0	0-0 / 0-0	3-78 / 0-54	2-17 / 0-15	2-17 / 0-15					
at #21 Northern Iowa	7-141 / 0-62	1-9 / 0-9	0-0 / 0-0	dnp	1-68 / 1-68	1-68 / 1-68					
at #1 Southern Illinois	4-62 / 0-23	5-68 / 0-21	3-29 / 0-11	dnp	0-0 / 0-0	0-0 / 0-0					
Indiana State	4-108 / 0-52	1-10 / 0-10	1-35 / 0-35	dnp	4-39 / 0-19	4-39 / 0-19					
Illinois State	2-55 / 0-34	0-0 / 0-0	2-34 / 0-27	dnp	5-81 / 0-47	5-81 / 0-47					
at Southwest Missouri State	4-49 / 0-26	0-0 / 0-0	1-16 / 0-16	0-0 / 0-0	3-16 / 0-7	3-16 / 0-7					
Western Illinois	2-15 / 0-10	dnp	0-0 / 0-0	1-12 / 0-12	3-19 / 0-13	3-19 / 0-13					
at Florida International	2-56 / 0-29	0-0 / 0-0	dnp	2-17 / 0-12	0-0 / 0-0	0-0 / 0-0					
<u>TACKLES (AT - UT / Tot)</u>		<u>D. Smith</u>	<u>Thompson</u>	<u>Cavitt</u>	<u>A. Thomas</u>	<u>Rumph</u>	<u>B. Smith</u>	<u>Mitchell</u>	<u>Neal</u>	<u>Woolridge</u>	<u>Williams</u>
at Kansas State	4-6 / 10	8-5 / 13	1-6 / 7	5-3 / 8	3-5 / 8	8-3 / 11	3-7 / 10	0-2 / 2	2-0 / 2	0-3 / 3	
Concord (W.Va.)	3-2 / 5	3-1 / 4	1-5 / 6	0-0 / 0	2-0 / 2	3-2 / 5	2-0 / 2	0-2 / 2	2-0 / 2	0-0 / 0	
at Eastern Kentucky	2-4 / 6	4-14 / 18	6-7 / 13	3-4 / 7	0-4 / 4	1-4 / 5	1-1 / 2	2-2 / 4	1-4 / 5	2-3 / 5	
Youngstown State	6-6 / 12	3-9 / 12	5-3 / 8	6-4 / 10	3-3 / 6	8-4 / 12	7-4 / 11	5-0 / 5	5-3 / 8	1-4 / 5	
at #21 Northern Iowa	8-2 / 10	1-2 / 3	5-2 / 7	2-3 / 5	4-3 / 7	1-1 / 2	3-3 / 6	5-0 / 5	6-0 / 6	2-1 / 3	
at #1 Southern Illinois	8-4 / 12	4-3 / 7	3-2 / 5	5-3 / 8	8-6 / 14	1-1 / 2	4-1 / 5	3-1 / 4	2-2 / 4	2-0 / 2	
Indiana State	3-4 / 7	5-6 / 11	2-3 / 5	3-3 / 6	4-4 / 8	3-2 / 5	1-1 / 2	3-1 / 4	0-1 / 1	2-1 / 3	
Illinois State	9-4 / 13	2-5 / 7	6-7 / 13	3-4 / 7	2-0 / 2	1-3 / 4	2-2 / 4	4-2 / 6	0-0 / 0	1-0 / 1	
at Southwest Missouri State	4-3 / 7	0-4 / 4	0-1 / 1	3-2 / 5	2-3 / 5	1-6 / 7	4-2 / 6	0-2 / 2	1-0 / 1	1-3 / 4	
Western Illinois	5-6 / 11	2-4 / 6	2-3 / 5	4-1 / 5	2-0 / 2	3-2 / 5	1-0 / 1	2-0 / 2	0-1 / 1	0-1 / 1	
at Florida International	2-3 / 5	6-1 / 7	5-1 / 6	7-2 / 9	4-2 / 6	2-3 / 5	7-1 / 8	3-0 / 3	2-2 / 4	3-0 / 3	
<u>PUNTING</u>		<u>KO RETURNS (Rets-Yds / TD-Lg)</u>									
<u>Claybourn (No - Yds - Avg / Lg - I20)</u>		<u>Mitchell</u>		<u>Porter</u>							
at Kansas State	4-208-52.0 / 59-1	3-37 / 0-30	0-0 / 0-0								
Concord (W.Va.)	2-90-45.0 / 52-1	1-21 / 0-21	0-0 / 0-0								
at Eastern Kentucky	7-265-37.9 / 61-2	0-0 / 0-0	0-0 / 0-0								
Youngstown State	4-181-45.2 / 55-0	0-0 / 0-0	2-43 / 0-23								
at #21 Northern Iowa	4-188-47.0 / 52-1	3-69 / 0-28	0-0 / 0-0								
at #1 Southern Illinois	4-152-38.0 / 51-2	7-137 / 0-28	0-0 / 0-0								
Indiana State	6-263-43.8 / 51-4	0-0 / 0-0	2-49 / 0-25								
Illinois State	5-241-48.2 / 58-0	0-0 / 0-0	3-96 / 0-66								
at Southwest Missouri State	2-84-42.0 / 43-0	0-0 / 0-0	2-46 / 0-31								
Western Illinois	3115-38.3 / 44-2	0-0 / 0-0	0-0 / 0-0								
at Florida International	2-92-46.0 / 50-0	1-38 / 0-38	0-0 / 0-0								

The 2004 Hilltoppers — Game-by-Game Starters

Offense											
Opponent	WR	LT	LG	C	RG	RT	TE	WR/TE	QB	FB/TE/WR	RB
at K-State	Clayton	Ashley	Mareko	Losey	R. Thomas	Dolchan	K. Phillips	Brunemann	Haddix	E. Williams	Moore
Concord	Perkins	Ashley	Hewig	Losey	R. Thomas	Dolchan	K. Phillips	Roberson	Haddix	Brunemann	Porter
at EKU	Perkins	Ashley	Hewig	Losey	R. Thomas	Dolchan	K. Phillips	Trumbo	Haddix	Brunemann	Moore
YSU	Perkins	Ashley	Hewig	Losey	R. Thomas	Dolchan	K. Phillips	Brunemann	Haddix	Hicks	Moore
at #21 UNI	Perkins	Ashley	Hewig	Losey	R. Thomas	Dolchan	K. Phillips	Scott	Haddix	Hicks	Moore
at #1 SIU	Perkins	Ashley	Hewig	Losey	R. Thomas	Dolchan	K. Phillips	Scott	Haddix	Hicks	Porter
Indiana State	Perkins	Ashley	Hewig	Losey	R. Thomas	Dolchan	K. Phillips	Scott	Haddix	Hicks	Moore
Illinois State	Perkins	Ashley	Mareko	Losey	R. Thomas	Dolchan	K. Phillips	Scott	Haddix	Hamilton	Moore
at SMS	Perkins	Ashley	Mareko	Losey	R. Thomas	Dolchan	Brunemann	Hamilton	Haddix	Cassity	Moore
Western Ill.	Perkins	Ashley	Mareko	Losey	R. Thomas	Dolchan	Brunemann	Hamilton	Haddix	Cassity	Moore
at FIU	Perkins	Ashley	Mareko	Losey	R. Thomas	Dolchan	Brunemann	Clemons	Haddix	Cassity	Moore
Defense											
Opponent	LE	NT	RE	OLB	ILB	ILB	OLB	CB	SS	FS	CB
at K-State	C. Phillips	Woolridge	D. Williams	B. Smith	Thompson	D. Smith	Cavitt	Thomas	Mitchell	Rumph	Neal
Concord	C. Phillips	Woolridge	D. Williams	B. Smith	Thompson	D. Smith	Cavitt	Thomas	Mitchell	Rumph	Neal
at EKU	C. Phillips	Woolridge	D. Williams	B. Smith	Thompson	D. Smith	Cavitt	Thomas	Mitchell	Rumph	Neal
YSU	C. Phillips	Woolridge	D. Williams	B. Smith	Thompson	D. Smith	Cavitt	Thomas	Mitchell	Rumph	Neal
at #21 UNI	C. Phillips	Woolridge	D. Williams	B. Smith	Thompson	D. Smith	Cavitt	Thomas	Mitchell	Rumph	Neal
at #1 SIU	C. Phillips	Woolridge	D. Williams	B. Smith	Thompson	D. Smith	Cavitt	Thomas	Mitchell	Rumph	Neal
Indiana State	C. Phillips	Woolridge	D. Williams	B. Smith	Thompson	D. Smith	Cavitt	Thomas	Mitchell	Rumph	Neal
Illinois State	C. Phillips	Dickens	D. Williams	B. Smith	Thompson	D. Smith	Cavitt	Thomas	Mitchell	Rumph	Neal
at SMS	C. Phillips	Woolridge	D. Williams	B. Smith	Thompson	D. Smith	Cavitt	Thomas	Mitchell	Rumph	Neal
Western Ill.	C. Phillips	Dickens	D. Williams	B. Smith	Thompson	D. Smith	Cavitt	Thomas	Mitchell	Rumph	Neal
at FIU	C. Phillips	Woolridge	D. Williams	B. Smith	Thompson	D. Smith	Cavitt	Thomas	Mitchell	Rumph	Neal

The 2004 Hilltoppers — Coaches' Awards — The 2004 Hilltoppers

Offense			Defense			Special Teams		
at Kansas State	Maurice Perkins, Jr., WR		Charles Thompson, Sr., ILB			Brian Claybourn, Sr., P		
Concord (W.Va.)	Stephen Willis, Fr., RB		Joe Woolridge, Jr., DL			Claybourn		
at Eastern Kentucky	Buster Ashley, Sr., OL		Getty Cavitt, Sr., OLB			G.J. Wooldridge, Fr., RB		
Youngstown State	Joe Dolchan, So., OL		Thompson					
at #21 Northern Iowa	Perkins		Deonté Smith, Sr., ILB			Chris James, Fr., PK		
at #1 Southern Illinois	Brian Porter, So., RB		Antonio Thomas, Sr., CB			Dennis Mitchell, Jr., SS		
Indiana State	Justin Haddix, So., QB		Marion Rumph, Fr., FS			—		
Illinois State	Haddix		A. Thomas			Claybourn		
at Southwest Missouri State	Willis		D. Smith			Claybourn		
Western Illinois	Lerron Moore, Jr., RB		Charlie Phillips, DL			Jon Hedges, So., ILB/LS		
at Florida International	Porter		Brandon Smith, OLB			Brian Porter, So., RB		
			D. Smith					
			Thompson			Mitchell		
Military Science Leadership Award			Scout Team — Offense			Scout Team — Defense		
at Kansas State	Buster Ashley, Sr., OL		Jack Rafferty, Fr., QB			Anthony Scolamieri, Fr., ILB		
Concord (W.Va.)	Deonté Smith, Sr., ILB		Nick Lowrey, Fr., OL			Clay Stephens, Fr., DB		
at Eastern Kentucky	Ryan Thomas, Sr., OL		Brent Gibbs, Fr., OL			Steven Tajer, Fr., DL		
Youngstown State	Charles Thompson, Sr., ILB		David Milan, So., TE			Ben Sowders, Fr., LB		
at #21 Northern Iowa	Justin Haddix, So., QB		Kevin Washington, Fr., WR			Fevaeai Mareko, Fr., OLB		
at #1 Southern Illinois	Erik Losey, Jr., OL		Philip Bates, Fr., FB			Brad Cloud, Fr., DB		
Indiana State	Jami DeBerry, Sr., ILB		Jamar Harris, Fr., RB			Dan Cline, Fr., OLB		
Illinois State	Getty Cavitt, Sr., OLB		Jared Johnson, Fr., FB			Jonathan Baptist, Fr., DB		
at Southwest Missouri State	Thompson		Rafferty			Stephens		
Western Illinois	senior class		Earl Clayton, Jr., WR			Travis Watters, Fr., DB		
at Florida International	Antonio Thomas, Sr., CB		Bates			Shane Green, Fr., ILB		

Game One

Kansas State 27, #13 WKU 13

September 4, 2004 / Manhattan, Kan.

	WKU	KSU
First Downs	13	27
Rush-Pass-Pen	4-8-1	17-10-0
Rush Atts-Net Yards	25-77	60-306
Net Yards Passing	182	196
Att-Comp-Int	21-10-0	21-14-0
Total Plays-Net Yards	46-259	81-502
Avg. Gain Per Play	5.6	6.2
Fumbles-Lost	1-0	3-1
Penalties-Yards	6-40	6-35
Interceptions-Yards	0-0	0-0
Punts-Average	4-52.0	1-38.0
Punt Returns-Yards	0-0	1-(-1)
Kickoff Returns-Yards	3-37	0-0
Possession Time	20:55	39:05
Third-Down Conversions	2-8	13-18

WKU (0-1)	0- 6- 7- 0	13
K-State (1-0)	7- 3- 10- 7	27

SCORING SUMMARY

1st Quarter

KSU — Dylan Meier, 9, run (Joe Rheem kick), 7:11 (80 yds, 15 plays, 7:49)

2nd Quarter

WKU — Lerron Moore, 13, run (kick failed), 10:43 (86 yds, 10 plays, 5:16)

KSU — Rheem, 22, field goal, 0:00 (54 yds, 9 plays, 2:58)

3rd Quarter

KSU — Darren Sproles, 32, run (Rheem kick), 10:41 (80 yds, 10 plays, 4:19)

KSU — Rheem, 19, field goal, 4:14 (80 yds, 10 plays, 4:38)

WKU — Earl Clayton, 5, pass from Justin Haddix (Tanner Siewart kick), 0:12 (58 yds, 8 plays, 4:02)

4th Quarter

KSU — Allen Webb, 8, run (Rheem kick), 6:34 (80 yds, 16 plays, 8:38)

Attendance: 46,740

INDIVIDUAL STAT LEADERS

Rushing

WKU — Lerron Moore 15-63

KSU — Darren Sproles 42-221 / 1 TD

Passing

WKU — Justin Haddix 21-10-0 / 182 yds / 1 TD

KSU — Dylan Meier 18-12-0 / 183 yds

Receiving

WKU — Maurice Perkins 5-126

KSU — Yamon Figurs 5-84

Punting

WKU — Brian Claybourn 4 / 52.0

KSU — Jesse Martinez 1 / 38.0

Tackles

WKU — Charles Thompson 8-5 / 13

Brandon Smith 8-3 / 11

Deonté Smith 4-6 / 10

Dennis Mitchell 3-7 / 10

KSU — Jesse Tetuan 7-1 / 8

Game Two

#11 WKU 58, Concord (W.Va.) 0

September 11, 2004 / Bowling Green, Ky.

	CC	WKU
First Downs	13	26
Rush-Pass-Pen	3-6-4	19-5-2
Rush Atts-Net Yards	24-41	55-375
Net Yards Passing	141	125
Att-Comp-Int	32-15-5	14-9-0
Total Plays-Net Yards	56-182	69-500
Avg. Gain Per Play	3.2	7.2
Fumbles-Lost	3-2	2-0
Penalties-Yards	6-50	10-90
Interceptions-Yards	0-0	5-5
Punts-Average	4-41.2	2-45.0
Punt Returns-Yards	1-1	3-35
Kickoff Returns-Yards	4-87	1-21
Possession Time	27:18	32:42
Third-Down Conversions	5-14	6-10

Concord (0-3)	0- 0- 0- 0	0
WKU (1-1)	27- 14- 14- 3	58

SCORING SUMMARY

1st Quarter

WKU — Maurice Perkins, 33, pass from Justin Haddix (Tanner Siewart), 12:34 (65 yds, 7 plays, 2:26)

WKU — Brian Porter, 1, run (Siewart kick), 11:17 (19 yds, 4 plays, 1:13)

WKU — Porter, 1, run (Siewart kick), 9:13 (22 yds, 5 plays, 1:56)

WKU — G.J. Wooldridge, 3, run (kick blocked), 6:26 (29 yds, 6 plays, 1:54)

2nd Quarter

WKU — Stephen Willis, 12, run (Siewart kick), 11:52 (86 yds, 8 plays, 4:26)

WKU — Haddix, 1, run (Siewart kick), 8:38 (42 yds, 4 plays, 1:29)

3rd Quarter

WKU — Willis, 2, run (Siewart kick), 8:54 (55 yds, 9 plays, 4:24)

WKU — Curtis Hamilton, 28, pass from Blake Ladson (Chris James kick), 6:06 (79 yds, 5 plays, 2:15)

4th Quarter

WKU — Siewart, 19, field goal, 14:55 (41 yds, 9 plays, 4:49)

Attendance: 10,390

INDIVIDUAL STAT LEADERS

Rushing

WKU — Stephen Willis 21-156 / 2 TDs

Brian Porter 13-90 / 2 TDs

CC — Aaron Morton 8-19

Passing

WKU — Justin Haddix 11-6-0 / 87 yds / 1 TD

CC — Derrick Midkiff 14-6-2 / 35 yds

Receiving

WKU — Maurice Perkins 4-61 / 1 TD

CC — Ron Buskey 5-33

Punting

WKU — Brian Claybourn 2 / 45.0

CC — Chris Harker 4 / 41.2

Tackles

WKU — Evan Brewer 4-2 / 6

Getty Cavitt 1-5 / 6

CC — Robert Sabbatini 6-7 / 13

Game Three

#10 WKU 21, Eastern Kentucky 8

September 18, 2004 / Bowling Green, Ky.

	WKU	EKU
First Downs	13	15
Rush-Pass-Pen	5-8-0	8-7-0
Rush Atts-Net Yards	36-149	42-104
Net Yards Passing	179	156
Att-Comp-Int	26-13-1	37-16-7
Total Plays-Net Yards	62-328	79-260
Avg. Gain Per Play	5.3	3.3
Fumbles-Lost	3-2	0-0
Penalties-Yards	5-55	6-26
Interceptions-Yards	7-31	1-0
Punts-Average	7-37.9	7-36.7
Punt Returns-Yards	4-8	2-23
Kickoff Returns-Yards	1-18	3-15
Possession Time	24:17	35:43
Third-Down Conversions	4-15	6-21

WKU (2-1)	0- 0- 7- 14	21
EKU (0-2)	0- 0- 0- 8	8

SCORING SUMMARY

3rd Quarter

WKU — Lerron Moore, 6, run (Tanner Siewart kick), 3:35 (77 yds, 9 plays, 2:27)

4th Quarter

WKU — Moore, 1, run (Siewart kick), 10:25 (1 yd, 1 plays, 0:02)

WKU — Moore, 25, run (Siewart kick), 8:15 (30 yds, 3 plays, 1:30)

EKU — C.J. Hudson, 1, run (Josh Greco run), 2:49 (71 yds, 14 plays, 5:26)

Attendance: 22,700

INDIVIDUAL STAT LEADERS

Rushing

WKU — Lerron Moore 26-113 / 3 TDs

EKU — C.J. Hudson 30-107 / 1 TD

Passing

WKU — Justin Haddix 26-13-1 / 179 yds

EKU — Josh Greco 36-16-7 / 167 yds

Receiving

WKU — Aaron Scott 3-32

Maurice Perkins 3-25

EKU — Andre Ralston 6-54

Allen Evans 4-56

Punting

WKU — Brian Claybourn 7 / 37.9

EKU — Phil Kuhl 7 / 36.7

Tackles

WKU — Charles Thompson 4-14 / 18

Getty Cavitt 6-7 / 13

EKU — Jerome Jones 7-4 / 11

Carl Hayden 4-6 / 10

Game Four

#6 WKU 44, Youngstown State 19

October 2, 2004 / Bowling Green, Ky.

	YSU	WKU
First Downs	24	14
Rush-Pass-Pen	10-14-0	8-6-0
Rush Atts-Net Yards	50-151	35-274
Net Yards Passing	286	182
Att-Comp-Int	44-29-2	11-8-1
Total Plays-Net Yards	94-437	46-456
Avg. Gain Per Play	4.6	9.9
Fumbles-Lost	4-2	2-1
Penalties-Yards	9-69	5-40
Interceptions-Yards	1-20	2-48
Punts-Average	5-38.0	4-45.2
Punt Returns-Yards	2-24	2-17
Kickoff Returns-Yards	5-134	2-43
Possession Time	36:59	23:01
Third-Down Conversions	8-19	1-8

YSU (2-3, 0-1)	7- 0- 0- 12	19
WKU (3-1, 1-0)	7- 6- 10- 21	44

SCORING SUMMARY

1st Quarter

YSU — Monquantae Gibson, 1, run (Nick Terracina kick), 7:16 (62 yds, 13 plays, 5:37)

WKU — Brian Porter, 26, run (Chris James kick), 1:48 (82 yds, 5 plays, 1:46)

2nd Quarter

WKU — James, 37, field goal, 1:22 (24 yds, 5 plays, 2:34)

WKU — James, 38, field goal, 0:00 (10 yds, 2 plays, 0:12)

3rd Quarter

WKU — James, 28, field goal, 10:03 (68 yds, 7 plays, 2:47)

WKU — Stephen Willis, 27, pass from Justin Haddix (James kick), 0:19 (94 yds, 7 plays, 3:53)

4th Quarter

WKU — Deonté Smith, 48, int ret (James kick), 14:48

YSU — Kyle Smith, 9, pass from Tom Zetts (pass failed), 11:23 (58 yds, 10 plays, 3:18)

WKU — Porter, 5, run (James kick), 10:33 (48 yds, 3 plays, 0:50)

YSU — Matt Rycraft, 6, pass from Zetts (run failed), 7:15 (61 yds, 10 plays, 3:11)

WKU — Lerron Moore, 29, run (James kick), 6:39 (44 yds, 2 plays, 0:36)

Attendance: 11,619

INDIVIDUAL STAT LEADERS

Rushing

WKU — Lerron Moore 17-173 / 1 TD

YSU — Josh Cayson 13-57

Passing

WKU — Justin Haddix 10-7-1 / 172 yds / 1 TD

YSU — Tom Zetts 40-28-2 / 286 yds / 2 TDs

Receiving

WKU — Cory Clemons 3-78

YSU — Shawn Carlson 6-43

Matt Rycraft 6-29 / 1 TD

Punting

WKU — Brian Claybourn 4 / 45.2

YSU — Joe Bishop 5 / 38.0

Tackles

WKU — Brandon Smith 8-4 / 12

Deonté Smith 6-6 / 12

Charles Thompson 3-9 / 12

Dennis Mitchell 7-4 / 11

Antonio Thomas 6-4 / 10

YSU — Mike Bracken 3-3 / 6

Dorian Chenault 1-5 / 6

Game Five

#6 WKU 17, #21 Northern Iowa 10

October 9, 2004 / Cedar Falls, Iowa

	WKU	UNI
First Downs	15	20
Rush-Pass-Pen	6-9-0	9-11-0
Rush Atts-Net Yards	38-150	41-154
Net Yards Passing	192	205
Att-Comp-Int	16-11-0	26-18-2
Total Plays-Net Yards	54-342	67-359
Avg. Gain Per Play	6.3	5.4
Fumbles-Lost	4-1	1-0
Penalties-Yards	3-35	3-30
Interceptions-Yards	2-0	0-0
Punts-Average	4-47.0	5-39.0
Punt Returns-Yards	1-68	3-43
Kickoff Returns-Yards	3-69	1-23
Possession Time	28:27	31:33
Third-Down Conversions	5-12	5-13

WKU (4-1, 2-0)	3- 7- 0- 7	17
UNI (1-4, 0-2)	0- 0- 10- 0	10

SCORING SUMMARY

1st Quarter

WKU — Chris James, 21, field goal, 11:17 (60 yds, 8 plays, 3:43)

2nd Quarter

WKU — Brian Porter, 2, run (James kick), 0:20 (80 yds, 7 plays, 1:55)

3rd Quarter

UNI — Ben Spellman, 1, pass from Eri c Sanders (Brian Wingert kick), 9:26 (80 yds, 11 plays, 5:34)

UNI — Wingert, 20, field goal, 4:49 (22 yds, 6 plays, 3:05)

4th Quarter

WKU — Dennis Mitchell, 68, punt ret (James kick), 13:23

Attendance: 7,518

INDIVIDUAL STAT LEADERS

Rushing

WKU — Lerron Moore 13-93

UNI — Richard Carter 15-65

Terrance Freeney 11-56

Passing

WKU — Justin Haddix 15-11-0 / 192 yds

UNI — Eric Sanders 26-18-2 / 205 yds / 1 TD

Receiving

WKU — Maurice Perkins 7-141

UNI — Andy Thorn 3-48

James Lindgren 3-42

Curt Bradley 3-20

Richard Carter 3-11

Punting

WKU — Brian Claybourn 4 / 47.0

UNI — Cory Henke 5 / 39.0

Tackles

WKU — Deonté Smith 8-2 / 10

UNI — Brett Koebcke 5-5 / 10

Game Six

#1 Southern Illinois 38, #4 WKU 10

October 16, 2004 / Carbondale, Ill.

	WKU	SIU
First Downs	19	27
Rush-Pass-Pen	9-9-1	17-10-0
Rush Atts-Net Yards	36-150	54-310
Net Yards Passing	202	163
Att-Comp-Int	25-16-2	18-13-1
Total Plays-Net Yards	61-352	72-473
Avg. Gain Per Play	5.8	6.6
Fumbles-Lost	2-2	1-0
Penalties-Yards	5-45	2-10
Interceptions-Yards	1-(-1)	2-29
Punts-Average	4-38.0	1-39.-
Punt Returns-Yards	0-0	0-0

Game Seven

#10 WKU 31, Indiana State 9

October 23, 2004 / Bowling Green, Ky.

	INS	WKU
First Downs	13	17
Rush-Pass-Pen	5-8-0	7-8-2
Rush Atts-Net Yards	31-80	46-161
Net Yards Passing	204	276
Att-Comp-Int	34-22-0	18-12-0
Total Plays-Net Yards	65-284	64-437
Avg. Gain Per Play	4.4	6.8
Fumbles-Lost	1-1	3-1
Penalties-Yards	6-48	5-40
Interceptions-Yards	0-0	0-0
Punts-Average	8-37.9	6-43.8
Punt Returns-Yards	3-27	4-39
Kickoff Returns-Yards	6-157	4-58
Possession Time	30:12	29:48
Third-Down Conversions	3-14	6-15

INS (4-4, 1-3)	0- 6- 3- 0	0	9
WKU (5-2, 3-1)	7- 7- 10- 7	7	31

SCORING SUMMARY

1st Quarter

WKU — Lerron Moore, 8, run (Chris James kick), 3:52 (60 yds, 8 plays, 2:34)

2nd Quarter

WKU — Stephen Willis, 1, run (James kick), 11:35 (83 yards, 9 plays, 3:17)

INS — Kyle Hooper, 29, field goal, 8:03 (4 yds, 4 plays, 1:33)

INS — Hooper, 40, field goal, 1:38 (53 yds, 10 plays, 4:00)

3rd Quarter

WKU — Brian Porter, 5, run (James kick), 7:54 (90 yds, 8 plays, 3:10)

INS — Hooper, 30, field goal, 3:13 (59 yds, 11 plays, 4:32)

WKU — James, 31, field goal, 0:00 (48 yds, 7 plays, 3:07)

4th Quarter

WKU — Earl Clayton, 53, pass from Justin Haddix (James kick), 12:59 (50 yds, 2 plays, 0:50)

Attendance: 7,390

INDIVIDUAL STAT LEADERS

Rushing

WKU — Lerron Moore 16-65 / 1 TD

INS — Jake Shields 18-81

Passing

WKU — Justin Haddix 18-12-0 / 276 yds / 1 TD

INS — Phillip Johnson 34-22-0 / 204 yds

Receiving

WKU — Maurice Perkins 4-108

INS — Sam Logan 10-114

Punting

WKU — Brian Claybourn 6 / 43.8

INS — Brandon Anweiler 8 / 37.9

Tackles

WKU — Charles Thompson 5-6 / 11

INS — LaDrelle Bryant 8-4 / 12

Derrick Williams 6-6 / 12

Game Eight

#7 WKU 24, Illinois State 21

October 30, 2004 / Bowling Green, Ky.

	ILS	WKU
First Downs	21	16
Rush-Pass-Pen	5-14-2	7-8-1
Rush Atts-Net Yards	38-82	40-84
Net Yards Passing	255	159
Att-Comp-Int	37-20-1	23-14-1
Total Plays-Net Yards	75-337	63-243
Avg. Gain Per Play	4.5	3.9
Fumbles-Lost	1-0	0-0
Penalties-Yards	7-65	12-102
Interceptions-Yards	1-0	1-2
Punts-Average	5-43.0	5-48.2
Punt Returns-Yards	2-20	5-81
Kickoff Returns-Yards	0-0	3-96
Possession Time	29:25	30:35
Third-Down Conversions	10-18	8-16

ILS (4-4, 2-3)	0- 13- 0- 8	0	21
WKU (6-2, 4-1)	7- 3- 7- 7	7	24

SCORING SUMMARY

1st Quarter

WKU — Chris Brunemann, 6, pass from Justin Haddix (Chris James kick), 4:08 (52 yds, 6 plays, 2:36)

2nd Quarter

ILS — Ramon Barber, 13, pass from Yance Vaughan (kick failed), 13:35 (80 yds, 14 plays, 5:33)

WKU — James, 29, field goal, 9:07 (63 yds, 11 plays, 4:23)

ILS — Jason Horton, 36, pass from Vaughan (Stephen Carroll kick), 1:33 (80 yds, 5 plays, 0:39)

3rd Quarter

WKU — Stephen Willis, 3, pass from Haddix (James kick), 13:19 (11 yds, 3 plays, 1:25)

4th Quarter

WKU — Brian Porter, 9, run (James kick), 10:40 (33 yds, 8 plays, 4:20)

ILS — Vaughn, 1, run (Kevett Mickle pass from Vaughan), 4:04 (74 yds, 14 plays, 4:09)

Attendance: 7,126

INDIVIDUAL STAT LEADERS

Rushing

WKU — Lerron Moore 19-56

ILS — Brian Thompson 21-67

Passing

WKU — Justin Haddix 22-13-1 / 140 yds / 2 TDs

ILS — Yance Vaughan 37-20-1 / 255 yds / 2 TDs

Receiving

WKU — Maurice Perkins 2-55

Curtis Hamilton 2-34

Ross Cassity 2-19

ILS — Kevett Mickle 6-63

Punting

WKU — Brian Claybourn 5 / 48.2

ILS — Ryan Hoffman 3 / 43.0

Tackles

WKU — Deonté Smith 9-4 / 13

Getty Cavitt 6-7 / 13

ILS — Antwan Oliver 7-2 / 9

Game Nine

#5 WKU 28, SMS 24

November 6, 2004 / Springfield, Mo.

	WKU	SMS
First Downs	26	9
Rush-Pass-Pen	20-6-0	2-7-0
Rush Atts-Net Yards	69-336	19-31
Net Yards Passing	125	217
Att-Comp-Int	13-9-4	33-17-0
Total Plays-Net Yards	82-461	52-248
Avg. Gain Per Play	5.6	4.8
Fumbles-Lost	2-1	0-0
Penalties-Yards	6-43	1-4
Interceptions-Yards	0-0	4-66
Punts-Average	2-42.0	6-47.2
Punt Returns-Yards	3-16	0-0
Kickoff Returns-Yards	2-46	2-9
Possession Time	39:59	20:01
Third-Down Conversions	11-16	4-13

WKU (7-2, 5-1)	7- 7- 0- 14	7	28
SMS (5-5, 2-4)	7- 7- 10- 0	7	24

SCORING SUMMARY

1st Quarter

SMS — Steven Rush, 10, pass from A.J. Porter (Jon Scifres kick), 13:07 (26 yds, 5 plays, 1:16)

WKU — Lerron Moore, 19, run (Chris James kick), 4:47 (63 yds, 7 plays, 2:23)

2nd Quarter

SMS — Rush, 83, pass Porter (Scifres kick), 10:18 (80 yds, 2 plays, 0:56)

WKU — Stephen Willis, 1, run (James kick), 1:07 (66 yds, 9 plays, 4:50)

3rd Quarter

SMS — Matt Buchholz, 2, pass Porter (Scifres kick), 11:18 (4 yds, 2 plays, 0:34)

SMS — Scifres, 40, field goal, 7:42 (12 yds, 7 plays, 2:00)

4th Quarter

WKU — Willis, 1, run (James kick), 10:58 (77 yds, 14 plays, 7:00)

WKU — Jutsin Haddix, 1, run (James kick), 6:17 (55 yds, 7 plays, 2:18)

Attendance: 8,942

INDIVIDUAL STAT LEADERS

Rushing

WKU — Stephen Willis 32-178 / 2 TDs

Lerron Moore 20-114 / 1 TD

SMS — Cody Pratt 9-33

Passing

WKU — Justin Haddix 13-9-4 / 125 yds

SMS — A.J. Porter 32-17-0 / 217 yds / 3 TDs

Receiving

WKU — Maurice Perkins 4-49

SMS — Steven Rush 10-151 / 2 TDs

Punting

WKU — Brian Claybourn 2 / 42.0

SMS — Jon Scifres 6 / 47.2

Tackles

WKU — Deonté Smith 4-3 / 7

SMS — Daryl Johnson 4-17 / 21

Jovon Lewis 6-11 / 17

Darren Barnett 6-8 / 14

Torre Endsley 2-12 / 14

Steve Watson 5-6 / 11

Game Ten

#5 WKU 45, Western Illinois 3

November 13, 2004 / Bowling Green, Ky.

	WIU	WKU
First Downs	12	26
Rush-Pass-Pen	5-6-1	24-1-1
Rush Atts-Net Yards	30-83	66-473
Net Yards Passing	95	62
Att-Comp-Int	31-12-1	14-6-0
Total Plays-Net Yards	61-178	80-535
Avg. Gain Per Play	2.9	6.7
Fumbles-Lost	0-0	1-1
Penalties-Yards	4-30	7-42
Interceptions-Yards	0-0	1-0
Punts-Average	9-33.3	3-38.3
Punt Returns-Yards	0-0	3-19
Kickoff Returns-Yards	5-138	0-0
Possession Time	21:54	38:06
Third-Down Conversions	4-16	8-14

WIU (4-7, 2-5)	0- 3- 0- 0	0	3
WKU (8-2, 6-1)	7- 10- 14- 14	7	45

SCORING SUMMARY

1st Quarter

WKU — Lerron Moore, 9, run (Chris James kick), 9:14 (40 yds, 6 plays, 2:44)

2nd Quarter

WKU — Moore, 8, run (James kick), 9:59 (76 yds, 11 plays, 5:12)

WKU — James, 44, field goal, 4:56 (16 yds, 6 plays, 3:25)

WIU — Langan, 53, field goal, 0:00 (44 yds, 6 plays, 0:34)

3rd Quarter

WKU — Moore, 6, run (James kick), 7:52 (85 yds, 11 plays, 5:27)

WKU — Brian Porter, 15, run (James kick), 0:49 (81 yds, 10 plays, 5:44)

4th Quarter

WKU — Moore, 3, run (James kick), 10:23 (57 yds, 8 plays, 4:27)

WKU — Blake Ladson, 2, run (James kick), 4:13 (67 yds, 6 plays, 2:47)

Attendance: 7,318

INDIVIDUAL STAT LEADERS

Rushing

WKU — Lerron Moore 34-219 / 4 TDs

WIU — Travis Glasford 16-56

Passing

WKU — Justin Haddix 14-6-0 / 62 yds

WIU — Steve LaFalce 21-9-1 / 71 yds

Receiving

WKU — Maurice Perkins 2-15

WIU — Jermaine High 4-39

Punting

WKU — Brian Claybourn 3 / 38.3

WIU — Kris Coffee 8 / 31.9

Tackles

WKU — Deonté Smith 5-6 / 11

WIU — Milan Woodard 5-13 / 18

Wyatt Green 9-8 / 17

Game Eleven

#3 WKU 35, Florida International 14

November 20, 2004 / Miami, Fla.

	WKU	FIU
First Downs	23	14
Rush-Pass-Pen	17-6-0	9-15-0
Rush Atts-Net Yards	59-383	32-133
Net Yards Passing	117	286
Att-Comp-Int	14-9-0	44-27-3
Total Plays-Net Yards	73-500	76-419
Avg. Gain Per Play	6.8	5.5
Fumbles-Lost	1-1	0-0
Penalties-Yards	4-33	5-34
Interceptions-Yards	3-6	0-0
Punts-Average	2-46.0	2-36.0
Punt Returns-Yards	0-0	1-9
Kickoff Returns-Yards	2-38	3-59
Possession Time	32:36	27:24
Third-Down Conversions	8-14	9-16

WKU (9-2)	0- 14- 7- 14	0	35
FIU (2-6)	0- 14- 0- 0	0	14

SCORING SUMMARY

2nd Quarter

WKU — Justin Haddix, 3, run (Chris James kick), 14:55 (84 yds, 17 plays, 8:06)

WKU — Brian Porter, 2, run (James kick), 3:54 (80 yds, 15 plays, 5:23)

FIU — Rashod Smith, 19, run (Adam Moss kick), 2:48 (65 yds, 5 plays, 1:00)

FIU — Cory McKinney, 4, pass from Josh Padrick (Moss kick), 0:10 (64 yds, 9 plays, 1:38)

3rd Quarter

WKU — Porter, 5, run (James kick), 12:23 (62 yds, 7 plays, 2:29)

4th Quarter

WKU — Porter, 67, run (James kick), 4:53 (71 yds, 2 plays, 0:53)

WKU — Porter, 46, run (James kick), 3:43 (46 yds, 1 play, 0:08)

Attendance: 3,108

INDIVIDUAL STAT LEADERS

Rushing

WKU — Brian Porter 24-213 / 4 TDs

FIU — Rashod Smith 29-131 / 1 TD

Passing

WKU — Justin Haddix 14-9-0 / 117 yds

FIU — Josh Padrick 44-27-3 / 286 yds / 1 TD

Receiving

WKU — Maurice Perkins 2-56

Lerron Moore 2-20

Cory Clemons 2-17

Ross Cassity 2-15

FIU — Cory McKinney 8-69 / 1 TD

Harold Leath 6-95

Punting

WKU — Brian Claybourn 2 / 46.0

FIU — Doug Jones 2 / 36.0

Tackles

WKU — Antonio Thomas 7-2 / 9

FIU — Johnathan Sturup 7-2 / 9

Nick Turnbull 7-2 / 9

Long Scoring Drives (80 yards or more)

Western Kentucky

• 94 yards vs. Youngstown State, 10/2 (94 yds, 7 plays, 3:53; TD — Stephen Willis, 27, pass from Justin Haddix; 0:19, 3rd quarter)

• 90 yards vs. Indiana State, 10/23 (90 yds, 8 plays, 3:10; TD — Brian Porter, 5, run; 7:54, 3rd quarter)

• 86 yards vs. Concord (W.Va.), 9/11 (86 yds, 8 plays, 4:26; TD — Stephen Willis, 12, run; 11:52, 2nd quarter)

• 86 yards at Kansas State, 9/4 (86 yds, 10 plays, 5:16; TD — Lerron Moore, 13, run; 10:43, 2nd quarter)

• 85 yards vs. Western Illinois, 11/13 (85 yds, 11 plays, 5:27; TD —

2004 Western Kentucky Football
Western Kentucky Overall Team Statistics (Nov 20, 2004)
All games

TEAM STATISTICS	WKU	OPP
SCORING.....	326	173
Points Per Game.....	29.6	15.7
FIRST DOWNS.....	208	205
Rushing.....	126	90
Passing.....	74	108
Penalty.....	8	7
RUSHING YARDAGE.....	2612	1475
Yards gained rushing.....	2813	1762
Yards lost rushing.....	201	287
Rushing Attempts.....	505	421
Average Per Rush.....	5.2	3.5
Average Per Game.....	237.5	134.1
TDs Rushing.....	34	10
PASSING YARDAGE.....	1801	2204
Att-Comp-Int.....	195-117-9	357-203-22
Average Per Pass.....	9.2	6.2
Average Per Catch.....	15.4	10.9
Average Per Game.....	163.7	200.4
TDs Passing.....	7	11
TOTAL OFFENSE.....	4413	3679
Total Plays.....	700	778
Average Per Play.....	6.3	4.7
Average Per Game.....	401.2	334.5
KICK RETURNS: #-YARDS.....	28-563	29-622
PUNT RETURNS: #-YARDS.....	25-283	15-146
INT RETURNS: #-YARDS.....	22-91	9-115
KICK RETURN AVERAGE.....	20.1	21.4
PUNT RETURN AVERAGE.....	11.3	9.7
INT RETURN AVERAGE.....	4.1	12.8
FUMBLES-LOST.....	21-10	14-6
PENALTIES-YARDS.....	68-565	55-401
Average Per Game.....	51.4	36.5
PUNTS-YARDS.....	43-1879	53-2057
Average Per Punt.....	43.7	38.8
Net punt average.....	40.3	33.5
TIME OF POSSESSION/GAME.....	29:45	30:15
3RD-DOWN CONVERSIONS.....	62/138	74/172
3rd-Down Pct.....	45%	43%
4TH-DOWN CONVERSIONS.....	6/12	7/19
4th-Down Pct.....	50%	37%
SACKS BY-YARDS.....	20-141	8-51
MISC YARDS.....	0	3
TOUCHDOWNS SCORED.....	43	21
FIELD GOALS-ATTEMPTS.....	9-13	9-15
PAT-ATTEMPTS.....	41-43	16-17
ATTENDANCE.....	43843	103817
Games/Avg Per Game.....	5/8769	6/17303

SCORE BY QUARTERS	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Total
Western Kentucky....	65	77	76	108	- 326
Opponents.....	21	60	47	45	- 173

2004 Western Kentucky Football
Western Kentucky Overall Individual Statistics (Nov 20, 2004)
All games

RUSHING	GP	Att	Gain	Loss	Net	Avg	TD	Long	Avg/G
Moore, Lerron	9	179	1007	37	970	5.4	11	50	107.8
Porter, Brian	11	117	673	43	630	5.4	13	67	57.3
Willis, Stephen	9	84	462	11	451	5.4	5	26	50.1
Haddix, Justin	11	75	340	74	266	3.5	3	33	24.2
Ladson, Blake	9	12	152	16	136	11.3	1	51	15.1
Perkins, M.	11	6	80	0	80	13.3	0	40	7.3
Wooldridge, GJ	9	15	70	0	70	4.7	1	12	7.8
Shirley, Rob	2	3	16	0	16	5.3	0	6	8.0
Cassity, Ross	5	3	7	0	7	2.3	0	5	1.4
Williams, Eric	6	1	4	0	4	4.0	0	4	0.7
Hicks, Brandon	6	1	2	0	2	2.0	0	2	0.3
TEAM	11	9	0	20	-20	-2.2	0	0	-1.8
Total.....	11	505	2813	201	2612	5.2	34	67	237.5
Opponents.....	11	421	1762	287	1475	3.5	10	32	134.1
PASSING	GP	Effic	Att-Cmp-Int	Pct	Yds	TD	Lng	Avg/G	
Haddix, Justin	11	137.28	189-112-9	59.3	1734	6	62	157.6	
Ladson, Blake	9	278.56	5-5-0	100.0	67	1	28	7.4	
TEAM	11	0.00	1-0-0	0.0	0	0	0	0.0	
Total.....	11	140.20	195-117-9	60.0	1801	7	62	163.7	
Opponents.....	11	106.56	357-203-22	56.9	2204	11	83	200.4	
RECEIVING	GP	No.	Yds	Avg	TD	Long	Avg/G		
Perkins, M.	11	38	746	19.6	1	62	67.8		
Scott, Aaron	10	11	125	11.4	0	21	12.5		
Hamilton, C.	10	10	201	20.1	1	35	20.1		
Willis, Stephen	9	8	127	15.9	2	30	14.1		
Porter, Brian	11	7	43	6.1	0	15	3.9		
Clemons, Cory	4	6	107	17.8	0	54	26.8		
Clayton, Earl	11	6	91	15.2	2	53	8.3		
Moore, Lerron	9	6	58	9.7	0	13	6.4		
Trumbo, Montaze	11	5	60	12.0	0	22	5.5		
Phillips, Karl	11	4	92	23.0	0	42	8.4		
Cassity, Ross	5	4	34	8.5	0	12	6.8		
Roberson, R.	11	3	27	9.0	0	15	2.5		
Haddix, Justin	11	2	29	14.5	0	19	2.6		
Ladson, Blake	9	2	18	9.0	0	11	2.0		
Williams, Eric	6	2	17	8.5	0	15	2.8		
Shirley, Rob	2	1	13	13.0	0	13	6.5		
Hicks, Brandon	6	1	7	7.0	0	7	1.2		
Brunemann, C.	11	1	6	6.0	1	6	0.5		
Total.....	11	117	1801	15.4	7	62	163.7		
Opponents.....	11	203	2204	10.9	11	83	200.4		

PUNT RETURNS	No.	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Mitchell, D.	24	273	11.4	1	68
Clayton, Earl	1	10	10.0	0	10
Total.....	25	283	11.3	1	68
Opponents.....	15	146	9.7	0	28
INTERCEPTIONS	No.	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Thomas, Antonio	6	15	2.5	0	15
Rumph, Marion	4	2	0.5	0	2
Neal, Artis	3	15	5.0	0	9
Cavitt, Getty	2	0	0.0	0	0
Smith, Deonte	2	48	24.0	1	48
Mitchell, D.	2	6	3.0	0	7
Mason, Brandon	1	0	0.0	0	0
Smith, Bo	1	5	5.0	0	5
Thompson, C.	1	0	0.0	0	0
Total.....	22	91	4.1	1	48
Opponents.....	9	115	12.8	0	37
KICK RETURNS	No.	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Mitchell, D.	15	302	20.1	0	38
Porter, Brian	9	234	26.0	0	66
Cavitt, Getty	2	0	0.0	0	0
Holland, Jared	1	9	9.0	0	9
Smith, Bo	1	18	18.0	0	18
Total.....	28	563	20.1	0	66
Opponents.....	29	622	21.4	0	46
FUMBLE RETURNS	No.	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Total.....	0	0	0.0	0	0
Opponents.....	1	3	3.0	0	3

2004 Western Kentucky Football
Western Kentucky Overall Individual Statistics (Nov 20, 2004)
All games

|----- PATs -----|									
SCORING	TD	FGs	Kick	Rush	Rcv	Pass	DXP	Saf	Points
Porter, Brian	13	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	78
Moore, Lerron	11	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	66
James, Chris	0	8-11	31-31	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	55
Willis, Stephen	7	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	42
Haddix, Justin	3	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	18
Siewart, Tanner	0	1-2	10-12	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	13
Clayton, Earl	2	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	12
Perkins, M.	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	6
Mitchell, D.	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	6
Hamilton, C.	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	6
Smith, Deonte	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	6
Ladson, Blake	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	6
Brunemann, C.	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	6
Wooldridge, GJ	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	6
Total.....	43	9-13	41-43	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	326
Opponents.....	21	9-15	16-17	1-2	1	1-2	0	0	173

FIELD GOALS	FGM-FGA	Pct	01-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-99	Lg	Blk
Siewart, Tanner	1-2	50.0	1-1	0-0	0-0	0-1	0-0	19	0
James, Chris	8-11	72.7	0-0	4-4	3-4	1-3	0-0	44	0

FG SEQUENCE	Western Kentucky	OPPONENTS
Kansas State	-	(22), (19)
Concord (W.Va.)	(19)	-
Eastern Kentucky	47	48
Youngstown State	(37), (38), (28)	-
Northern Iowa	(21), 37	(20)
Southern Illinois	(29)	38, (24)
Indiana State	(31), 42	(29), (40), (30)
Illinois State	(29)	49
SMS	-	(40)
Western Illinois	(44)	48, (53)
Fla. International	47	27, 28

Numbers in parentheses indicate field goal was made.

SACKS BY TEAMS									
MISC STATS									
TOUCHDOWNS SCORED									
FIELD GOALS-ATTEMPTS									
PAT-ATTEMPTS									
ATTENDANCE									
Games/Avy Per Game									

SCORES BY QUARTERS	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Total
Western Kentucky	68	77	76	108	329
Opponents	21	60	47	43	171

2004 Western Kentucky Football
Western Kentucky Overall Individual Statistics (Nov 20, 2004)
All games

ALL PURPOSE	G	Rush	Rec	PR	KOR	IR	Tot	Avg/G
Moore, Lerron	9	970	58	0	0	0	1028	114.2
Porter, Brian	11	630	43	0	234	0	907	82.5
Perkins, M.	11	80	746	0	0	0	826	75.1
Mitchell, D.	11	0	0	273	302	6	581	52.8
Willis, Stephen	9	451	127	0	0	0	578	64.2
Haddix, Justin	11	266	29	0	0	0	295	26.8
Hamilton, C.	10	0	201	0	0	0	201	20.1
Ladson, Blake	9	136	18	0	0	0	154	17.1
Scott, Aaron	10	0	125	0	0	0	125	12.5
Clemons, Cory	4	0	107	0	0	0	107	26.8
Clayton, Earl	11	0	91	10	0	0	101	9.2
Phillips, Karl	11	0	92	0	0	0	92	8.4
Wooldridge, GJ	9	70	0	0	0	0	70	7.8
Trumbo, Montaze	11	0	60	0	0	0	60	5.5
Smith, Deonte	11	0	0	0	0	48	48	4.4
Cassity, Ross	5	7	34	0	0	0	41	8.2
Shirley, Rob	2	16	13	0	0	0	29	14.5
Roberson, R.	11	0	27	0	0	0	27	2.5
Smith, Bo	11	0	0	0	18	5	23	2.1
Williams, Eric	6	4	17	0	0	0	21	3.5
Neal, Artis	11	0	0	0	0	15	15	1.4
Thomas, Antonio	11	0	0	0	0	15	15	1.4
Holland, Jared	11	0	0	0	9	0	9	0.8
Hicks, Brandon	6	2	7	0	0	0	9	1.5
Brunemann, C.	11	0	6	0	0	0	6	0.5
Rumph, Marion	11	0	0	0	0	2	2	0.2
TEAM	11	-20	0	0	0	0	-20	-1.8
Total.....	11	2612	1801	283	563	91	5350	486.4
Opponents.....	11	1475	2204	146	622	115	4562	414.7

CONVERSIONS									
PAT-CONVERSIONS									
FIELD GOALS-ATTEMPTS									
PAT-ATTEMPTS									
ATTENDANCE									
Games/Avy Per Game									

SCORES BY QUARTERS	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Total
Western Kentucky	38	43	41	77	199
Opponents	14	43	37	30	124

2004 Western Kentucky Football
Western Kentucky Overall Defensive Statistics (Nov 20, 2004)
All games

DEFENSIVE LEADERS	Tackles				Sacks		Pass Def			Fumbles		Blkd	
	GP	Solo	Ast	Total	TFL/Yds	No-Yds	Int-Yds	BrUp	QBH	Rev-Yds	FF	Kick	Saf
7 Smith, Deonte	11	54	44	98	10.5-38	2.5-15	2-48	.	.	1-0	1	.	.
9 Thompson, C.	11	38	54	92	8.0-23	2.0-13	1-0	2	1	1-0	.	.	.
31 Cavitt, Getty	11	36	40	76	8.5-27	1.5-10	2-0	3	.	.	.	.	.
6 Thomas, Antonio	11	41	29	70	2.5-8	.	6-15	8	.	.	.	.	.
10 Rumph, Marion	11	34	30	64	.	.	4-2	2	.	.	.	.	.
11 Smith, Brandon	11	32	31	63	10.5-46	5.0-40	.	2	2	1-0	2	.	.
21 Mitchell, D.	11	36	22	58	4.5-17	.	2-6	2	.	1-0	.	1	.
14 Neal, Artis	11	27	12	39	.	.	3-15	6	.	.	.	.	.
93 Woolridge, Joe	11	21	13	34	4.5-16	1.0-11	.	.	1	1-0	1	.	.
96 Williams, D.	11	14	16	30	7.5-29	1.0-8	.	1	.	.	.	.	.
99 Phillips, C.	11	10	14	24	2.5-11	1.5-9	.	3	.	.	.	.	.
48 Brewer, Evan	11	11	9	20	1.0-2	.	.	.	.	1-0	.	.	.
19 Sexton, Sam	11	10	9	19	2.0-6	1.0-4	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
90 Dickens, Ross	11	4	14	18	4.5-11	1.0-5	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
35 Carter, J.	11	4	7	11	0.5-1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
5 Smith, Bo	11	8	2	10	1.0-3	.	1-5	1	.	.	1	.	.
59 Holts, Deion	5	7	3	10	1.0-3	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
58 Johnson, Josh	11	5	4	9	0.5-1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
53 Bear, Dusty	10	2	5	7	1.5-13	1.5-13	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
2 Garibaldi, K.	9	2	5	7	.	.	.	2	.	.	.	.	.
32 Hedges, Jon	11	5	1	6	1.0-6	1.0-6	.	.	1	.	.	.	.
20 Greschel, Scott	11	2	4	6	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
24 Mason, Brandon	11	1	4	5	.	.	1-0	.	.	.	.	.	.
13 Lewis, Andre	5	2	2	4	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
82 Trumbo, Montaze	11	3	1	4	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
27 Wooldridge, GJ	9	3	1	4	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
91 Dinsmore, Dan	6	2	1	3	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
55 Watkins, Ricky	7	1	1	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
23 Porter, Brian	11	2	.	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
29 DeBerry, Jami	6	.	2	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
44 Phillips, Karl	11	1	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
65 Hewig, Bill	8	1	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
54 Losey, Erik	11	1	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
75 Thomas, Ryan	11	1	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
85 Perkins, M.	11	1	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Total.....	11	422	380	802	72-261	20-141	22-91	32	5	6-0	5	1	.
Opponents.....	11	441	355	796	39-134	8-51	9-115	21	6	10-3	10	1	.

2004 Western Kentucky Football
Western Kentucky Overall Team Statistics (Nov 20, 2004)
Conference games

TEAM STATISTICS	WKU	OPP
SCORING.....	199	124
Points Per Game.....	28.4	17.7
FIRST DOWNS.....	133	126
Rushing.....	81	53
Passing.....	47	70
Penalty.....	5	3
RUSHING YARDAGE.....	1628	891
Yards gained rushing.....	1781	1094
Yards lost rushing.....	153	203
Rushing Attempts.....	330	263
Average Per Rush.....	4.9	3.4
Average Per Game.....	232.6	127.3
TDs Rushing.....	19	5
PASSING YARDAGE.....	1198	1425
Att-Comp-Int.....	120-76-8	223-131-7
Average Per Pass.....	10.0	6.4
Average Per Catch.....	15.8	10.9
Average Per Game.....	171.1	203.6
TDs Passing.....	4	10
TOTAL OFFENSE.....	2826	2316
Total Plays.....	450	486
Average Per Play.....	6.3	4.8
Average Per Game.....	403.7	330.9
KICK RETURNS: #-YARDS.....	21-449	19-461
PUNT RETURNS: #-YARDS.....	18-240	10-114
INT RETURNS: #-YARDS.....	7-49	8-115
KICK RETURN AVERAGE.....	21.4	24.3
PUNT RETURN AVERAGE.....	13.3	11.4
INT RETURN AVERAGE.....	7.0	14.4
FUMBLES-LOST.....	14-7	8-3
PENALTIES-YARDS.....	43-347	32-256
Average Per Game.....	49.6	36.6
PUNTS-YARDS.....	28-1224	39-1525
Average Per Punt.....	43.7	39.1
Net punt average.....	39.6	32.9
TIME OF POSSESSION/GAME.....	30:57	29:02
3RD-DOWN CONVERSIONS.....	42/91	41/103
3rd-Down Pct.....	46%	40%
4TH-DOWN CONVERSIONS.....	3/5	4/12
4th-Down Pct.....	60%	33%
SACKS BY-YARDS.....	16-118	7-46
MISC YARDS.....	0	3
TOUCHDOWNS SCORED.....	25	15
FIELD GOALS-ATTEMPTS.....	8-10	7-10
PAT-ATTEMPTS.....	25-25	11-12
ATTENDANCE.....	33453	31269
Games/Avg Per Game.....	4/8363	3/10423

SCORE BY QUARTERS	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Total
Western Kentucky....	38	43	41	77	- 199
Opponents.....	14	43	37	30	- 124

2004 Western Kentucky Football
Western Kentucky Overall Individual Statistics (Nov 20, 2004)
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RUSHING	GP	Att	Gain	Loss	Net	Avg	TD	Long	Avg/G
Moore, Lerron	6	119	747	27	720	6.1	7	50	120.0
Porter, Brian	7	72	334	32	302	4.2	7	32	43.1
Willis, Stephen	7	62	304	11	293	4.7	3	26	41.9
Haddix, Justin	7	51	227	64	163	3.2	1	33	23.3
Ladson, Blake	6	7	73	5	68	9.7	1	51	11.3
Perkins, M.	7	4	54	0	54	13.5	0	40	7.7
Wooldridge, GJ	5	5	29	0	29	5.8	0	12	5.8
Cassity, Ross	3	2	7	0	7	3.5	0	5	2.3
Williams, Eric	4	1	4	0	4	4.0	0	4	1.0
Hicks, Brandon	5	1	2	0	2	2.0	0	2	0.4
TEAM	7	6	0	14	-14	-2.3	0	0	-2.0
Total.....	7	330	1781	153	1628	4.9	19	51	232.6
Opponents.....	7	263	1094	203	891	3.4	5	24	127.3

PASSING	GP	Effic	Att-Cmp-Int	Pct	Yds	TD	Lng	Avg/G
Haddix, Justin	7	144.78	117-74-8	63.2	1169	4	62	167.0
Ladson, Blake	6	221.80	2-2-0	100.0	29	0	19	4.8
TEAM	7	0.00	1-0-0	0.0	0	0	0	0.0
Total.....	7	144.86	120-76-8	63.3	1198	4	62	171.1
Opponents.....	7	120.94	223-131-7	58.7	1425	10	83	203.6

RECEIVING	GP	No.	Yds	Avg	TD	Long	Avg/G
Perkins, M.	7	24	478	19.9	0	62	68.3
Willis, Stephen	7	8	127	15.9	2	30	18.1
Hamilton, C.	7	7	114	16.3	0	35	16.3
Scott, Aaron	6	7	87	12.4	0	21	14.5
Porter, Brian	7	6	34	5.7	0	15	4.9
Clemons, Cory	3	4	90	22.5	0	54	30.0
Clayton, Earl	7	4	82	20.5	1	53	11.7
Moore, Lerron	6	4	38	9.5	0	13	6.3
Haddix, Justin	7	2	29	14.5	0	19	4.1
Roberson, R.	7	2	23	11.5	0	15	3.3
Cassity, Ross	3	2	19	9.5	0	12	6.3
Ladson, Blake	6	2	18	9.0	0	11	3.0
Phillips, Karl	7	1	42	42.0	0	42	6.0
Hicks, Brandon	5	1	7	7.0	0	7	1.4
Brunemann, C.	7	1	6	6.0	1	6	0.9
Trumbo, Montaze	7	1	4	4.0	0	4	0.6
Total.....	7	76	1198	15.8	4	62	171.1
Opponents.....	7	131	1425	10.9	10	83	203.6

PUNT RETURNS	No.	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Mitchell, D.	18	240	13.3	1	68
Total.....	18	240	13.3	1	68
Opponents.....	10	114	11.4	0	28

INTERCEPTIONS	No.	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Thomas, Antonio	3	0	0.0	0	0
Thompson, C.	1	0	0.0	0	0
Rumph, Marion	1	2	2.0	0	2
Smith, Deonte	1	48	48.0	1	48
Mitchell, D.	1	-1	-1.0	0	0
Total.....	7	49	7.0	1	48
Opponents.....	8	115	14.4	0	37

KICK RETURNS	No.	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Mitchell, D.	10	206	20.6	0	28
Porter, Brian	9	234	26.0	0	66
Holland, Jared	1	9	9.0	0	9
Cavitt, Getty	1	0	0.0	0	0
Total.....	21	449	21.4	0	66
Opponents.....	19	461	24.3	0	46

FUMBLE RETURNS	No.	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Total.....	0	0	0.0	0	0
Opponents.....	1	3	3.0	0	3

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----- PATs -----									
SCORING	TD	FGs	Kick	Rush	Rev	Pass	DXP	Saf	Points
James, Chris	0	8-10	25-25	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	49
Moore, Lerron	7	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	42
Porter, Brian	7	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	42
Willis, Stephen	5	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	30
Brunemann, C.	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	6
Smith, Deonte	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	6
Haddix, Justin	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	6
Mitchell, D.	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	6
Clayton, Earl	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	6
Ladson, Blake	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	6
Total.....	25	8-10	25-25	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	199
Opponents.....	15	7-10	11-12	0-1	1	1-2	0	0	124

FIELD GOALS	FGM-FGA	Pct	01-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-99	Lg	Blk
James, Chris	8-10	80.0	0-0	4-4	3-4	1-2	0-0	44	0

FG SEQUENCE	Western Kentucky	OPPONENTS
Youngstown State	(37), (38), (28)	-
Northern Iowa	(21), 37	(20)
Southern Illinois	(29)	38, (24)
Indiana State	(31), 42	(29), (40), (30)
Illinois State	(29)	49
SMS	-	(40)
Western Illinois	(44)	48, (53)

Numbers in (parentheses) indicate field goal was made.

TOTAL OFFENSE	G	Plays	Rush	Pass	Total	Avg/G
Haddix, Justin	7	168	163	1169	1332	190.3
Moore, Lerron	6	119	720	0	720	120.0
Porter, Brian	7	72	302	0	302	43.1
Willis, Stephen	7	62	293	0	293	41.9
Ladson, Blake	6	9	68	29	97	16.2
Perkins, M.	7	4	54	0	54	7.7
Wooldridge, GJ	5	5	29	0	29	5.8
Cassity, Ross	3	2	7	0	7	2.3
Williams, Eric	4	1	4	0	4	1.0
Hicks, Brandon	5	1	2	0	2	0.4
TEAM	7	7	-14	0	-14	-2.0
Total.....	7	450	1628	1198	2826	403.7
Opponents.....	7	486	891	1425	2316	330.9

PUNTING	No.	Yds	Avg	Long	TB	FC	I20	Blkd
Claybourn, B.	28	1224	43.7	58	8	4	9	0
Total.....	28	1224	43.7	58	8	4	9	0
Opponents.....	39	1525	39.1	56	2	7	11	0

2004 Western Kentucky Football
Western Kentucky Overall Individual Statistics (Nov 20, 2004)
Conference games

ALL PURPOSE	G	Rush	Rec	PR	KOR	IR	Tot	Avg/G
Moore, Lerron	6	720	38	0	0	0	758	126.3
Porter, Brian	7	302	34	0	234	0	570	81.4
Perkins, M.	7	54	478	0	0	0	532	76.0
Mitchell, D.	7	0	0	240	206	-1	445	63.6
Willis, Stephen	7	293	127	0	0	0	420	60.0
Haddix, Justin	7	163	29	0	0	0	192	27.4
Hamilton, C.	7	0	114	0	0	0	114	16.3
Clemons, Cory	3	0	90	0	0	0	90	30.0
Scott, Aaron	6	0	87	0	0	0	87	14.5
Ladson, Blake	6	68	18	0	0	0	86	14.3
Clayton, Earl	7	0	82	0	0	0	82	11.7
Smith, Deonte	7	0	0	0	0	48	48	6.9
Phillips, Karl	7	0	42	0	0	0	42	6.0
Wooldridge, GJ	5	29	0	0	0	0	29	5.8
Cassity, Ross	3	7	19	0	0	0	26	8.7
Roberson, R.	7	0	23	0	0	0	23	3.3
Hicks, Brandon	5	2	7	0	0	0	9	1.8
Holland, Jared	7	0	0	0	9	0	9	1.3
Brunemann, C.	7	0	6	0	0	0	6	0.9
Trumbo, Montaze	7	0	4	0	0	0	4	0.6
Williams, Eric	4	4	0	0	0	0	4	1.0
Rumph, Marion	7	0	0	0	0	2	2	0.3
TEAM	7	-14	0	0	0	0	-14	-2.0
Total.....	7	1628	1198	240	449	49	3564	509.1
Opponents.....	7	891	1425	114	461	115	3006	429.4

2004 Western Kentucky Football
Western Kentucky Overall Defensive Statistics (Nov 20, 2004)
Conference games

		Tackles				Sacks	Pass Def		Fumbles		Blkd			
DEFENSIVE LEADERS		GP	Solo	Ast	Total	TFL/Yds	No-Yds	Int-Yds	BrUp	QBH	Rcv-Yds	FF	Kick	Saf
7	Smith, Deonte	7	43	29	72	6.5-29	2.5-15	1-48	.	.	1-0	1	.	.
9	Thompson, C.	7	17	33	50	4.5-16	1.5-11	1-0	.	.	.	.	.	.
6	Thomas, Antonio	7	26	20	46	2.5-8	.	3-0	6	.	.	.	.	.
31	Cavitt, Getty	7	23	21	44	4.0-17	1.5-10	.	2	.	.	.	.	.
10	Rumph, Marion	7	25	19	44	.	.	1-2	2	.	.	.	.	.
11	Smith, Brandon	7	18	19	37	7.5-35	3.5-29	.	2	.	.	1	.	.
21	Mitchell, D.	7	23	13	36	2.5-5	.	1--1	1	.	1-0	.	.	.
14	Neal, Artis	7	22	6	28	.	.	.	4	.	.	.	.	.
93	Woolridge, Joe	7	14	7	21	4.0-16	1.0-11	.	.	.	.	1	.	.
96	Williams, D.	7	9	10	19	2.5-14	1.0-8	.	1	.	.	.	.	.
99	Phillips, C.	7	8	8	16	2.5-11	1.5-9	.	2	.	.	.	.	.
19	Sexton, Sam	7	8	5	13	1.0-2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
90	Dickens, Ross	7	2	9	11	3.0-10	1.0-5	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
59	Holts, Deion	5	7	3	10	1.0-3	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
48	Brewer, Evan	7	2	5	7	.	.	.	.	.	1-0	.	.	.
35	Carter, J.	7	2	3	5	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
58	Johnson, Josh	7	3	2	5	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
5	Smith, Bo	7	3	2	5	1.0-3	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
53	Bear, Dusty	6	1	4	5	1.5-13	1.5-13	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
20	Greschel, Scott	7	2	2	4	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
32	Hedges, Jon	7	2	1	3	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
23	Porter, Brian	7	2	.	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
29	DeBerry, Jami	3	.	2	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
24	Mason, Brandon	7	.	2	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
2	Garibaldi, K.	5	.	2	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
27	Wooldridge, GJ	5	1	1	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
82	Trumbo, Montaze	7	2	.	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
55	Hewig, Bill	4	1	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
91	Dinsmore, Dan	5	.	1	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
75	Thomas, Ryan	7	1	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
44	Phillips, Karl	7	1	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
55	Watkins, Ricky	5	.	1	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
13	Lewis, Andre	2	.	1	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
85	Perkins, M.	7	1	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
54	Losey, Erik	7	1	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Total.....		7	270	231	501	44-182	16-118	7-49	20	.	3-0	3	.	.
Opponents.....		7	267	266	533	33-108	7-46	8-115	6	.	7-3	8	.	.

2004 Western Kentucky Football
Western Kentucky Overall Team Statistics (Nov 20, 2004)
Away games

TEAM STATISTICS	WKU	OPP
SCORING.....	124	121
Points Per Game.....	20.7	20.2
FIRST DOWNS.....	109	122
Rushing.....	61	62
Passing.....	46	60
Penalty.....	2	0
RUSHING YARDAGE.....	1245	1038
Yards gained rushing.....	1350	1173
Yards lost rushing.....	105	135
Rushing Attempts.....	263	248
Average Per Rush.....	4.7	4.2
Average Per Game.....	207.5	173.0
TDs Rushing.....	15	8
PASSING YARDAGE.....	997	1223
Att-Comp-Int.....	115-68-7	179-105-13
Average Per Pass.....	8.7	6.8
Average Per Catch.....	14.7	11.6
Average Per Game.....	166.2	203.8
TDs Passing.....	1	7
TOTAL OFFENSE.....	2242	2261
Total Plays.....	378	427
Average Per Play.....	5.9	5.3
Average Per Game.....	373.7	376.8
KICK RETURNS: #-YARDS.....	18-345	9-106
PUNT RETURNS: #-YARDS.....	8-92	7-74
INT RETURNS: #-YARDS.....	13-36	7-95
KICK RETURN AVERAGE.....	19.2	11.8
PUNT RETURN AVERAGE.....	11.5	10.6
INT RETURN AVERAGE.....	2.8	13.6
FUMBLES-LOST.....	13-7	5-1
PENALTIES-YARDS.....	29-251	23-139
Average Per Game.....	41.8	23.2
PUNTS-YARDS.....	23-989	22-884
Average Per Punt.....	43.0	40.2
Net punt average.....	39.8	36.0
TIME OF POSSESSION/GAME.....	28:51	31:09
3RD-DOWN CONVERSIONS.....	33/75	44/91
3rd-Down Pct.....	44%	48%
4TH-DOWN CONVERSIONS.....	3/9	3/10
4th-Down Pct.....	33%	30%
SACKS BY-YARDS.....	9-62	7-44
MISC YARDS.....	0	3
TOUCHDOWNS SCORED.....	17	15
FIELD GOALS-ATTEMPTS.....	2-5	5-9
PAT-ATTEMPTS.....	16-17	14-14
ATTENDANCE.....	0	103817
Games/Avg Per Game.....	0/0	6/17303

SCORE BY QUARTERS	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Total
Western Kentucky.....	10	37	21	56	- 124
Opponents.....	14	38	44	25	- 121

2004 Western Kentucky Football
Western Kentucky Overall Individual Statistics (Nov 20, 2004)
Away games

RUSHING	GP	Att	Gain	Loss	Net	Avg	TD	Long	Avg/G	
Moore, Lerron	5	93	473	16	457	4.9	5	45	91.4	
Porter, Brian	6	71	400	22	378	5.3	6	67	63.0	
Willis, Stephen	4	44	257	2	255	5.8	2	26	63.8	
Haddix, Justin	6	45	156	59	97	2.2	2	13	16.2	
Ladson, Blake	4	1	31	0	31	31.0	0	31	7.8	
Perkins, M.	6	2	20	0	20	10.0	0	14	3.3	
Wooldridge, GJ	5	2	7	0	7	3.5	0	5	1.4	
Shirley, Rob	1	1	6	0	6	6.0	0	6	6.0	
Cassity, Ross	2	1	0	0	0	0.0	0	0	0.0	
TEAM	6	3	0	6	-6	-2.0	0	0	-1.0	
Total.....	6	263	1350	105	1245	4.7	15	67	207.5	
Opponents.....	6	248	1173	135	1038	4.2	8	32	173.0	
PASSING	GP	Eff	Att	Comp	Int	Pct	Yds	TD	Lng	Avg/G
Haddix, Justin	6	123.73	114	68	7	59.6	997	1	62	166.2
TEAM	6	0.00	1	0	0	0.0	0	0	0	0.0
Total.....	6	122.65	115	68	7	59.1	997	1	62	166.2
Opponents.....	6	114.43	179	105	13	58.7	1223	7	83	203.8
RECEIVING	GP	No.	Yds	Avg	TD	Long	Avg/G			
Perkins, M.	6	25	459	18.4	0	62	76.5			
Scott, Aaron	6	9	109	12.1	0	21	18.2			
Hamilton, C.	5	6	104	17.3	0	33	20.8			
Willis, Stephen	4	4	73	18.2	0	30	18.2			
Phillips, Karl	6	3	50	16.7	0	21	8.3			
Trumbo, Montaze	6	3	34	11.3	0	16	5.7			
Moore, Lerron	5	3	33	11.0	0	13	6.6			
Clayton, Earl	6	3	28	9.3	1	16	4.7			
Porter, Brian	6	3	27	9.0	0	11	4.5			
Williams, Eric	4	2	17	8.5	0	15	4.2			
Clemons, Cory	2	2	17	8.5	0	12	8.5			
Cassity, Ross	2	2	15	7.5	0	11	7.5			
Shirley, Rob	1	1	13	13.0	0	13	13.0			
Ladson, Blake	4	1	11	11.0	0	11	2.8			
Hicks, Brandon	2	1	7	7.0	0	7	3.5			
Total.....	6	68	997	14.7	1	62	166.2			
Opponents.....	6	105	1223	11.6	7	83	203.8			

PUNT RETURNS	No.	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Mitchell, D.	8	92	11.5	1	68
Total.....	8	92	11.5	1	68
Opponents.....	7	74	10.6	0	28
INTERCEPTIONS	No.	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Rumph, Marion	3	0	0.0	0	0
Thomas, Antonio	3	15	5.0	0	15
Neal, Artis	2	15	7.5	0	9
Mitchell, D.	2	6	3.0	0	7
Thompson, C.	1	0	0.0	0	0
Cavitt, Getty	1	0	0.0	0	0
Smith, Deonte	1	0	0.0	0	0
Total.....	13	36	2.8	0	15
Opponents.....	7	95	13.6	0	37

KICK RETURNS	No.	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Mitchell, D.	14	281	20.1	0	38
Porter, Brian	2	46	23.0	0	31
Smith, Bo	1	18	18.0	0	18
Cavitt, Getty	1	0	0.0	0	0
Total.....	18	345	19.2	0	38
Opponents.....	9	106	11.8	0	44

FUMBLE RETURNS	No.	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Total.....	0	0	0.0	0	0
Opponents.....	1	3	3.0	0	3

2004 Western Kentucky Football
Western Kentucky Overall Individual Statistics (Nov 20, 2004)
Away games

|----- PATs -----|									
SCORING	TD	FGs	Kick	Rush	Rcv	Pass	DXP	Saf	Points
Porter, Brian	6	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	36
Moore, Lerron	5	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	30
James, Chris	0	2-4	12-12	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	18
Haddix, Justin	2	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	12
Willis, Stephen	2	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	12
Clayton, Earl	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	6
Mitchell, D.	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	6
Siewart, Tanner	0	0-1	4-5	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	4
Total.....	17	2-5	16-17	0-0	0	0-0	0	0	124
Opponents.....	15	5-9	14-14	1-1	0	0-0	0	0	121

FIELD GOALS	FGM-FGA	Pct	01-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-99	Lg	Blk
Siewart, Tanner	0-1	0.0	0-0	0-0	0-0	0-1	0-0	0	0
James, Chris	2-4	50.0	0-0	2-2	0-1	0-1	0-0	29	0

FG SEQUENCE	Western Kentucky	OPPONENTS
Kansas State	-	(22), (19)
Eastern Kentucky	47	48
Northern Iowa	(21), 37	(20)
Southern Illinois	(29)	38, (24)
SMS	-	(40)
Fla. International	47	27, 28

Numbers in (parentheses) indicate field goal was made.

PENALTIES-YARDS	29-234	31	1	1.3	13	0
Average Pen Yards	41	13	0	0.3	2	0
PUNTS-YARDS	23-509	11	0	0.3	46	0
Average Pen Punt	41	11	0	0.1	3	0
Not punt average	38	11	0	0.1	3	0
TIME OF POSSESSION/GAME	28:37	11	0	0.0	12	0
3RD-DOWN CONVERSIONS	53/73	7	0	0.1	44	21
3rd-Down Pct	44	13	1	1.3	10	0
4TH-DOWN CONVERSIONS	3/14	3	1	1.1	10	0
4th-Down Pct	33	3	1	0.3	3	0
SACKS BY-YARDS	9-62	7	4	7	4	0
MISC YARDS	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOUCHDOWNS SCORED	17	13	0	13	0	0
FIELD GOALS-ATTEMPTS	2-5	3	0	3	0	0
PAT-ATTEMPTS	16-17	14	14	14	14	0
ATTENDANCE	0	103817	0	103817	0	0
Games/Avg Per Game	0/0	6/7303	0	6/7303	0	0

SCORE BY QUARTERS	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Total
Western Kentucky	10	37	21	58	124
Opponents.....	14	38	44	25	121

2004 Western Kentucky Football
Western Kentucky Overall Individual Statistics (Nov 20, 2004)
Away games

ALL PURPOSE	G	Rush	Rec	PR	KOR	IR	Tot	Avg/G
Moore, Lerron	5	457	33	0	0	0	490	98.0
Perkins, M.	6	20	459	0	0	0	479	79.8
Porter, Brian	6	378	27	0	46	0	451	75.2
Mitchell, D.	6	0	0	92	281	6	379	63.2
Willis, Stephen	4	255	73	0	0	0	328	82.0
Scott, Aaron	6	0	109	0	0	0	109	18.2
Hamilton, C.	5	0	104	0	0	0	104	20.8
Haddix, Justin	6	97	0	0	0	0	97	16.2
Phillips, Karl	6	0	50	0	0	0	50	8.3
Ladson, Blake	4	31	11	0	0	0	42	10.5
Trumbo, Montaze	6	0	34	0	0	0	34	5.7
Clayton, Earl	6	0	28	0	0	0	28	4.7
Shirley, Rob	1	6	13	0	0	0	19	19.0
Smith, Bo	6	0	0	0	18	0	18	3.0
Williams, Eric	4	0	17	0	0	0	17	4.2
Clemons, Cory	2	0	17	0	0	0	17	8.5
Neal, Artis	6	0	0	0	0	15	15	2.5
Cassity, Ross	2	0	15	0	0	0	15	7.5
Thomas, Antonio	6	0	0	0	0	15	15	2.5
Wooldridge, GJ	5	7	0	0	0	0	7	1.4
Hicks, Brandon	2	0	7	0	0	0	7	3.5
TEAM	6	-6	0	0	0	0	-6	-1.0
Total.....	6	1245	997	92	345	36	2715	452.5
Opponents.....	6	1038	1223	74	106	95	2536	422.7

2004 Western Kentucky Football
Western Kentucky Overall Defensive Statistics (Nov 20, 2004)
Away games

DEFENSIVE LEADERS	-----Tackles-----				| -Sacks-|		| ---Pass Def---|		| -Fumbles-|		| Blkd	
	GP	Solo	Ast	Total	TFL/Yds	No-Yds	Int-Yds	BrUp	QBH	Rcv-Yds	FF	Kick Saf
9 Thompson, C.	6	23	29	52	5.5-10	0.5-2	1-0	2	1	1-0	.	.
7 Smith, Deonte	6	28	22	50	4.0-10	.	1-0	.	.	.	.	.
10 Rumph, Marion	6	21	23	44	.	.	3-0	1	.	.	.	.
6 Thomas, Antonio	6	25	17	42	0.5-2	.	3-15	6	.	.	.	.
31 Cavitt, Getty	6	20	19	39	5.5-13	.	1-0	1	.	.	.	.
21 Mitchell, D.	6	22	15	37	3.5-16	.	2-6	1	.	.	1	.
11 Smith, Brandon	6	14	18	32	4.0-27	3.0-27	.	.	2	.	.	.
93 Woolridge, Joe	6	14	8	22	2.5-12	1.0-11	.	.	1	.	.	.
96 Williams, D.	6	10	10	20	5.5-17	.	.	1	.	.	.	.
14 Neal, Artis	6	13	7	20	.	.	2-15	4	.	.	.	.
99 Phillips, C.	6	4	6	10	1.5-5	1.0-4	.	1	.	.	.	.
35 Carter, J.	6	4	4	8	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
48 Brewer, Evan	6	6	2	8	1.0-2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
90 Dickens, Ross	6	1	6	7	1.0-2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
19 Sexton, Sam	6	4	2	6	2.0-6	1.0-4	.	.	.	.	.	.
5 Smith, Bo	6	3	1	4	.	.	.	1	.	.	.	.
58 Johnson, Josh	6	3	1	4	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
20 Greschel, Scott	6	1	3	4	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
32 Hedges, Jon	6	4	.	4	1.0-6	1.0-6	.	.	1	.	.	.
53 Bear, Dusty	5	1	2	3	0.5-1	0.5-1	.	.	.	.	.	.
2 Garibaldi, K.	6	.	3	3	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
91 Dinsmore, Dan	3	2	.	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
59 Holts, Deion	2	1	1	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
55 Watkins, Ricky	3	1	1	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
27 Wooldridge, GJ	5	1	1	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
82 Trumbo, Montaze	6	1	1	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
24 Mason, Brandon	6	1	1	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
54 Losey, Erik	6	1	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
44 Phillips, Karl	6	1	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
85 Perkins, M.	6	1	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
13 Lewis, Andre	4	.	1	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
75 Thomas, Ryan	6	1	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Total.....	6	232	204	436	38-129	9-62	13-36	18	5	1-0	1	.
Opponents.....	6	248	192	440	21-78	7-44	7-95	15	6	7-3	6	.

Toppers disappointed

WKU sent to Sam Houston in first round of playoffs

By ROB HERBST
The Daily News
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A festive celebration instantly turned into dead silence once Western Kentucky found out its playoff fate.

Supporters joined the WKU football program at E.A. Diddle Arena to watch the I-AA playoff selection show Sunday. Many assumed WKU would be playing at home this weekend — instead the Hilltoppers will visit Sam Houston State in Huntsville, Texas, in Saturday's first round.

It took WKU coach David Elson, almost always a glass-is-half-full kind of guy, to break the hush, blurring out, "We're in."

"It's kind of shocking," WKU sophomore quarterback Justin Haddix said. "It's something we were looking forward to, playing one or two games at home."

The Hilltoppers, who are making their fifth straight playoff appearance, thought

they were playing for a top-four seed in the 16-team field last weekend. Only four teams receive seeds and are guaranteed home games, then matchups are based on geography.

But when WKU beat Florida International 35-14 last weekend, it thought there'd be at least one playoff game at L.T. Smith Stadium.

"We really did think we'd be positioned a little bit better than that," Elson said. "But life throws you curveballs, you have to adjust to them and you have to hit them anyway."

Teams must also submit bids to the NCAA to host home games. A minimum bid of \$30,000 is required to host a first-round game, \$40,000 for the second round and \$50,000 for the semifinals.

According to WKU athletics director Wood Selig, Western did submit a bid "a

WKU

VS.

SH

WESTERN KENTUCKY (9-2) AT

SAM HOUSTON STATE (9-2)

Saturday - 1 p.m.

at Bowers Stadium

Huntsville, Texas

little above the minimum."

Selig said the bid was similar to those submitted in previous seasons and Western has hosted first-round games in each of the last two seasons and three of the last four years.

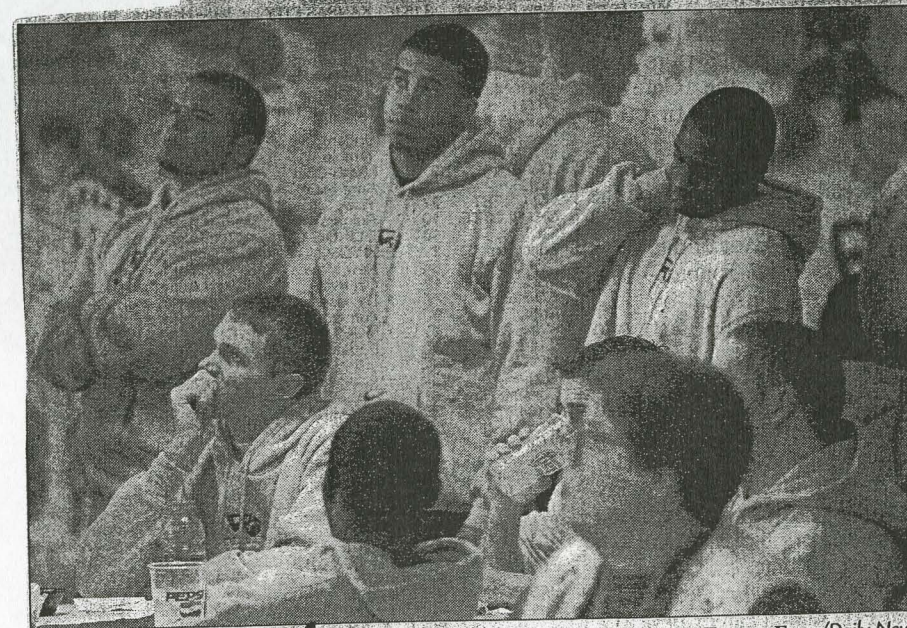
"You could have almost made a photocopy of our bid this year compared to before," Selig said.

"But I'm hearing schools were making bids increasingly higher. I heard some first-round bids were in the six figures and that would be irresponsible of us."

Because Western placed a similar bid than in past seasons and since Western's playoff resume seemed to be better than over the last two seasons it has hosted playoff games, Selig was surprised to find out WKU wouldn't be home on Thanksgiving weekend.

See **PLAYOFFS**, 10B

with draw



Trevor Frey/Daily News

Western Kentucky football players watch the announcement of the NCAA I-AA football playoff brackets on Sunday in E.A. Diddle Arena. The Hilltoppers were expecting to get at least one home playoff game, but must play at Sam Houston State in the first round instead.

PLAYOFFS, from 3B

Over the past two seasons, Western has finished the regular season at 8-3 and hosted the Ohio Valley Conference champion. This season, WKU's only losses have been to I-AA Kansas State and at No. 1 Southern Illinois. The Hilltoppers were also ranked No. 3 in the latest poll released by The Sports Network.

The inconsistency of being a host or being at home makes Selig support a playoff system in which eight teams would be seeded. The playoffs used to seed all 16 teams, but went to a four-seed system that put an emphasis on geography in 2001.

"I think they looked strictly at

Mapquest and your bids," Selig said. "It really illustrates the need to play it down to the top eight seeds. There's too much emphasis on geography and financial bid. That's having an impact on competition when the impact should be on win-loss record more than geography."

Pairing teams on geography can also be a challenge since there's a disproportionate number of teams in the eastern part of the country. Only four of the 16 teams in the field are west of the Mississippi River and no teams in the same conference can play each other in the first round.

Sam Houston State, about an

hour north of Houston, shared the Southland Conference crown with Northwestern State. Sam Houston State (9-2) received an at-large bid and will be hosting only its second I-AA playoff game.

The Bearcats are ranked No. 10 in The Sports Network poll and have won eight of their last nine games. Quarterback Dustin Long is a contender for the Walter Payton Award, which goes to the top I-AA offensive player.

Long has thrown for 3,400 yards and 34 touchdowns this year.

One of Sam Houston State's losses was an 33-31 defeat at

Gateway Conference member Southwest Missouri State. WKU defeated SMS 28-24 earlier this month. While Sam Houston State is unfamiliar to the Hilltoppers, Western could face a familiar foe if it survives Saturday.

The winner of Saturday's contest will face either Eastern Washington or No. 1 Southern Illinois in the quarterfinals. SIU defeated Western 38-10 in October.

"We're excited to be in," Elson said. "It's a school we don't know a whole lot about, yet. We've proven we can win on the road and we've proven we can win on the road in the playoffs, so our guys will look forward to it."

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

WKU sent on road for I-AA playoff opener

By Michael Grant
mgrant@courier-journal.com
The Courier-Journal

Many figured a 9-2 record and a No. 3 ranking would be enough for the Western Kentucky University football team to secure a first-round home game and perhaps one of the top four seeds for the NCAA Division I-AA playoffs.

Apparently, the playoff selection committee thought differently.

In a surprise, the Hilltoppers will open the playoffs on the road at 2 p.m. EST Saturday against No. 10 Sam Houston State (9-2).

A top-four seed would have given Western a chance to play host to its first two playoff games. But if the Hilltoppers are fortunate enough to win Saturday, they probably would travel to top-seeded and Gateway Conference champion Southern Illinois for the second round. The Salukis, who will play host to Eastern Washington in the first

round, beat Western Kentucky 38-10 last month in Carbondale.

Western entered the playoffs last year with an 8-3 record, beat Jacksonville State in a first-round home game and then lost 34-17 at Wofford in the quarterfinals.

"It's a great honor to be in the 16-team field, especially when you look back at the beginning of the year when a lot of folks questioned whether we would be in a position to qualify for the postseason," said Western coach David Elson, whose team closed its regular season Saturday with a 35-14 victory at Florida International. "We're excited to finish the regular season at 9-2 and be where we are right now. It's a credit to our coaches and our players who did a great job all year."

Sam Houston State, the Southland Conference co-champion with Northwestern State, is led by quarterback Dustin Long. The transfer from Texas A&M has passed for 3,408 yards and 31 touchdowns and is a finalist for

the Walter Payton Award, which goes to the top offensive player in Division I-AA. Long has two effective targets in Jarrod Fuller (74 catches, 1,111 yards and seven touchdowns) and Jason Mathenia (51 catches, 985 yards and 11 TDs).

The Hilltoppers and Bearcats shared one opponent this season. Sam Houston State lost 33-31 at Southwest Missouri State on Sept. 11. The Hilltoppers won 28-24 at Southwest Missouri State on Nov. 6.

"We don't know a whole lot about SHSU since we've never faced them, but we've played McNeese State (in the 2002 I-AA championship game) before and know of the competition in the Southland Conference," Elson said.

Western will be making its fifth straight appearance in the I-AA playoffs, the second-longest streak in the nation behind Montana (12). The Hilltoppers are 5-2 in I-AA playoff openers.

11-22-04

Linemen answer coach's challenge

By ROB HERBST
The Daily News

rherbst@bgdailynews.com/783-3238

A little motivation has gone a long way for the Western Kentucky offensive line.

After the Hilltoppers rushed for 84 yards, WKU coach David Elson called out the Hilltoppers' line during a pregame meeting against Southwest Missouri State. The result? Western rushed for 336 yards against Southwest Missouri State two weeks ago.

Last week, Western junior running back Lerron Moore promised the offensive line steak dinners if he rushed for 200 yards for the first time in his WKU career. The linemen will be getting a free dinner — Moore rushed for 219 yards in WKU's 45-3 victory over Western Illinois last weekend.

"We've been challenged pretty good and have taken it to heart," WKU senior offensive lineman Buster Ashley said. "I still don't think we've played to our capabilities, but I think we're playing as one."

When the Hilltoppers sit down for steaks on Moore's tab, it won't be the first time Moore has treated the linemen. After a quality performance last season, Moore took his linemen out for chicken wings.

Once the feast for several 300-pound bodies was over, Moore received a bill for more than \$190.

"That wasn't nearly as bad as this one is going to be," Moore lamented. "It's going to hit me hard when I see that check, but I'll find a way to get it paid."

If the linemen eat like last year, Moore may need to take out a loan. According to Moore, former WKU offensive lineman Anthony Oakley, who was a senior last year, topped all teammates with 50 wings.

Moore recalled Ashley was a close second with 30 wings — plus a take-home order.

"I believe he'll pay up ... or he'd better," Ashley joked. "I know he'll come through, though, because he's true to his word."

Whether it's coincidence or not, the Western offensive line has put together two of its best performances in as many weeks, and the production has been needed.

The Hilltoppers went four consecutive games without having more than 160 yards of rushing.

But with two consecutive strong performances by the offensive line, WKU once again has confidence in running the football heading into its regular-season finale at Florida International.

"It's almost like a totally fresh unit came in there and started playing," Moore said. "When they started getting confidence, I started getting confidence. Once

our running game is established, it's pretty hard for anyone to stop us."

Not only has the offensive line helped Western's running game, but that leads to the potential for an improved passing game. One of Western Kentucky quarterback Justin Haddix's strengths is his ability to sell a play-action pass fake.

If the Hilltoppers aren't successful in running the football, defenses won't be biting on the play-action pass as much.

A big part of our passing game is based off of play-action passing," Elson said. "If you're not able to run it, those play actions don't work quite as well. Justin does a good job with it, so it's something we've got to be able to take advantage of."

"We talk every week how it all starts up front with (the linemen)."

Elson said he has seen improved play from his offensive line. According to WKU

WESTERN KENTUCKY (8-2) AT FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL (2-5)

Site: FIU Stadium, Miami
Kickoff: 3 p.m. (CST), Saturday
Records: Western Kentucky (8-2), Florida International (2-5)
Series: Western Kentucky leads 1-0
Coaches: David Elson (17-6 season, 17-6 overall), Western Kentucky Don Stock (9-2), third season overall, Florida International
Television: None
Radio: Big Red Radio Network (W-FM 103.7) with Mike Legg and Leo Enpaugh

junior center Erik Losey, Elson said before the SMS game an effect.

"A lot did have to do with challenging us," Losey said. "You're not a football player if you didn't take that person. He called us all out by name. It was pretty intense."

11/19/04

Thursday, November 18, 2004

Back to full

Now healthy, Moore looking forward to playoff push

By ROB HERBST
The Daily News

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After his first play in last week's game, Western Kentucky running back Lerron Moore knew the day would be different.

Moore took a handoff from quarterback Justin Haddix and dashed 20 yards.

It was only the beginning for Moore as he rushed for a career-high 219 yards in the Hilltoppers' 45-3 win over Western Illinois.

"From the first play, I thought it was going to be a good game," Moore said. "We just kept running and running and from there on, I knew it was our game."

Throughout much of this season, Moore has been slowed by a hamstring injury. The injury forced him to

WESTERN KENTUCKY (8-2) AT FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL (2-5)

Saturday - 3 p.m. (CST)
at FIU Community Stadium
Miami

sit out in the Hilltoppers' clash at No. 1 Southern Illinois.

In his three performances after sitting out, Moore never received more than 20 carries. It was a much lighter workload for a running back that often works a double shift. Last season Moore had at least 30 carries in two games and finished with 1,490 yards.

Since sitting out against Southern Illinois, Moore had always publicly proclaimed himself to be healthy. But he said he felt like a different running back against Western Illinois last week.

"I was probably hard-headed and said that I was 100 percent when I really wasn't," Moore said. "I was just trying to keep the mindset to stay confident and not worry about it too much."

"But I'm definitely 100 percent now, no question about it."

Moore's performance against Western Illinois was proof he's healthy. He had a career-high 34 carries to go along with his 219 yards.

Moore also tied a school record with four touchdowns. Because of his performance, Moore now leads all Gateway Conference running backs in average yards per game with 112.

He's only 104 yards away from breaking the 1,000-yard mark for the

strength

second consecutive season.

"I think he'd look you in the eye now and honestly say he wasn't 100 percent," WKU coach David Elson said. "He was close, but not quite there. He was always a little bit leery to really let it go and was a little tentative."

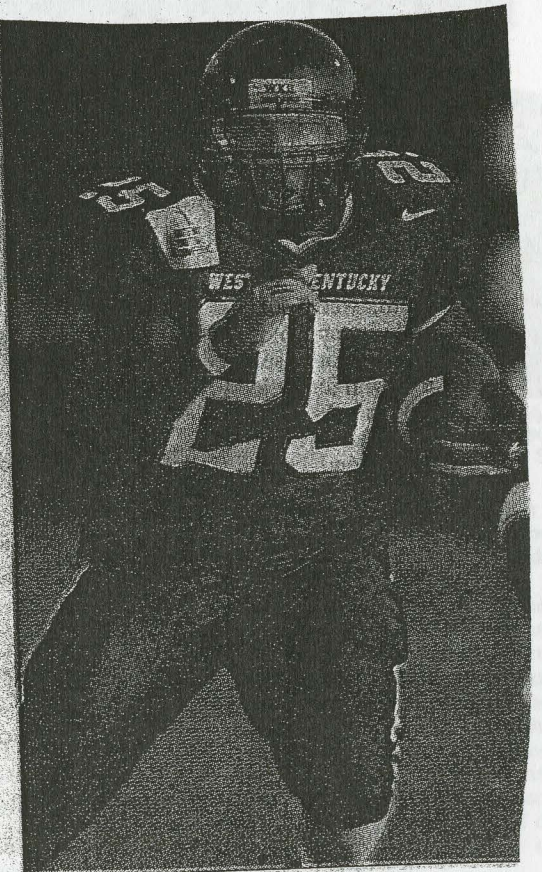
Without a perfectly healthy Moore, the Hilltoppers still didn't fall on hard times. Western is currently on a four-game winning streak and backups Stephen Willis and Brian Porter have both shown to be capable running backs.

Porter had 92 yards on 17 carries against Southern Illinois and added

See MOORE, 3C

Lerron Moore looks for running room during the Hilltoppers' 45-3 win over Western Illinois last week at L. T. Smith Stadium.

Joe Imel/AP



Losey glad for a home at WKU

By ROB HERBST
The Daily News

When Western Kentucky offensive lineman Erik Losey transferred from East Tennessee at the end of last season, teammates quickly realized how committed he was.

During the offseason, Western players participate in conditioning sessions called "Red Dawn." It's a grueling 5:30 a.m. wake-up call that can last for up to two hours.

As senior offensive lineman Buster Ashley puts it: "You run around, roll, flip, puke. It's like a boot camp."

It's enough to test any newcomer, yet Ashley said Losey didn't miss a session.

"That's when peoples' real personalities come out," Ashley said. "That's the hardest part of the whole year. It tells you if they're dedicated or if they're just here to say they're a part of the program. (Erik) gave it his all and wanted to show everybody he was here to play."

Being a key member of a winning program partially led to Losey's commitment. Western has been to the I-AA playoffs for four consecutive seasons, while East Tennessee never won more than two conference games in each of Losey's two seasons.

ETSU then decided to eliminate the football program after the 2003, so Losey needed to find a new home.

"He's a competitor and, just like any kid, he wanted to be a winner," WKU coach David Elson said. "He was tired of being in a program where they weren't winning."

But Western still had to win a recruiting battle for Losey last year. He was planning to attend I-A Ohio because a former offensive line coach at ETSU was now on the Ohio staff.

His feelings began to change when he made an official visit to watch Western host Jacksonville State in the I-AA playoffs.

Then when Losey attended last year's I-AA national championship game between Colgate and Delaware in Chattanooga, Tenn., near his hometown of Hixson, he decided to attend WKU.

"It's funny because when I came to the Jacksonville State game, I was still pretty set on (attending Ohio)," Losey said. "I didn't want to believe that I liked (WKU) because once I make up my mind, I'm pretty set. But I fell in love with this place and I watched the national championship game thinking I could be playing in it."

Losey has been a needed addition to the Hilltoppers' offensive line.

Western lost three starters from last year's offensive line and the 6-foot-2, 285-pound junior has started all 10 games at center.

Losey has also helped Western rush for at least 336 yards in each of the last two games.

"I think we could probably be in trouble without him," Ashley said. "He's contributed a lot this year and we're grateful to have him."

It wasn't a flawless transition for. When he began participating in spring practice,

best running backs can make the Hilltoppers more dangerous in the

The (Western Illinois) game was one I felt like I had to have. Moore said. "I was starting to lose some confidence after awhile and I felt like I wasn't running the ball like I was capable of running the ball."

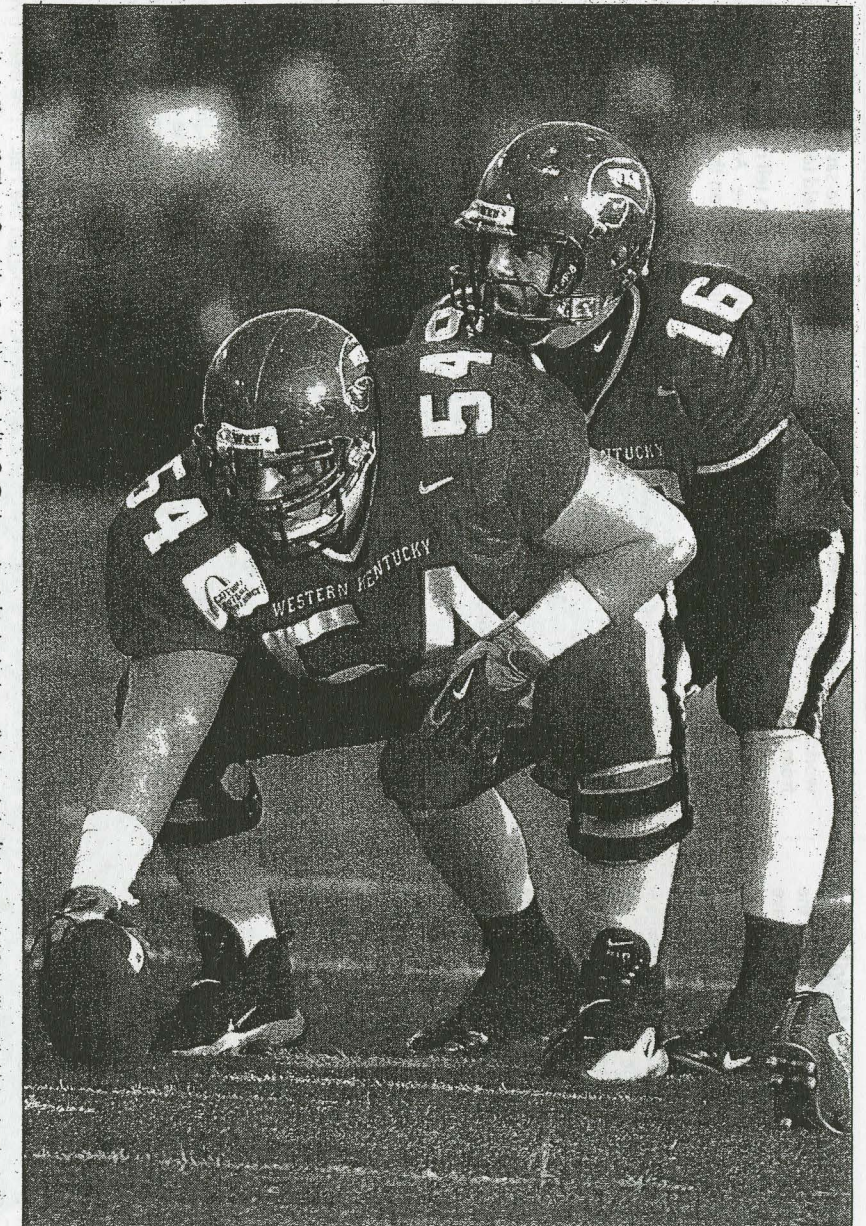
guys know that if they're not performing or carrying the load, we've got other guys to go to.

Moore's resurgence came just in time too. With a probable playoff trip looming after the Hilltoppers' regular season finale at Florida International on Saturday, having the same Moore that was among I-AA's

68 yards on seven carries against Western Illinois.

Willis had a career-high 178 yards on 32 carries against Southwest Missouri State. Maybe not coincidentally, Moore's career game came a week after Willis torched SMS.

"Competition makes us all better," Elson said. "All those



Joe Imel/Daily News

Western Kentucky center Erik Losey (54) gets ready to snap the ball to quarterback Justin Haddix in the Hilltoppers' win over Western Illinois on Saturday at L.T. Smith Stadium.

Losey was learning under his third offensive line coach in as many years. That forced Losey to be patient while getting acclimated to the Hilltoppers.

"I'm not the 'smartest pea in the pod when it comes to stuff and in the preseason we had a little hair-pulling," Losey joked. "I'm sure there were times when they wanted to cut my head off and give up on me."

Instead, Western also stayed patient and has seen the benefits of having Losey.

"I've seen him have an impact on the program from the get-go," Elson said. "It's been a learning process for him and he gradually has gotten better. He's been a great, great addition for us."

Now that Losey is with the Hilltoppers, he's once again hoping to be in Chat-

tanooga for the I-AA title game on Dec. 17. This time, Losey wants to be on the field instead of in the stands wondering what school he'll be attending.

With an 8-2 record heading into the regular-season finale at Florida International on Saturday, the Hilltoppers are virtually assured a playoff bid. It would be Losey's first action in the I-AA playoffs and it would be more evidence to Losey that he made the right move in attending Western.

"That would be the biggest Christmas present ever," Losey said. "After last week's win, I gave (associate head coach Willie Taggart and offensive line coach Walter Wells) a big hug."

"I just wanted to thank them because for the first time I've won eight games in my life. And I want to keep that going."

11-17-04



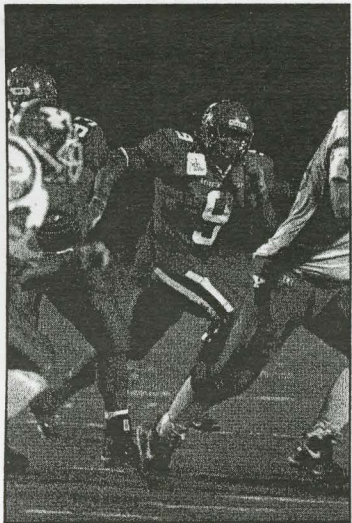
Competition Pushes Toppers' Thompson To Extraordinary Heights

He's seen by many as intimidating, and that may have something to do with the success he has on the field for the Western Kentucky University football team. But make no mistake about it — one would have to look long and hard to find as competitive a Hilltopper as **Charles Thompson**, and that's gone a long way in developing another in a line of outstanding linebackers at WKU.

"Charles has always competed to be the best he can be," second-year head coach **David Elson** says. "One of the strengths of our program is that we have a lot of guys who are competitors, they want to be the best at what they are doing. Charles is definitely a leader in that category. You can see that competitive fire in him not just during the season, but in the weight room and throughout the offseason."

Assistant coach **Craig Aukerman** is only in his first year working with inside linebackers after spending his first season at Western with outside linebackers, but he claims he has not seen the likes of Thompson since joining the coaching ranks in 1999. "Charles is the most competitive person that I've coached. Whether it be out on the practice field or throughout the game, he is all about wanting to be the best he can be."

"It's great for a coach, working with players like that who are willing to learn in order to raise the level of their game."



Charles Thompson — one of nine seniors who will be honored prior to Western's last regular season home game of the year — has been a mainstay on the Hilltopper defense since earning significant playing time as a freshman in 2001. (photo by Faye Lash)

Thompson laughs when asked about comparing his competitive nature with that of his teammates, although he acknowledges it would be hard to find someone who competes harder than the 6-foot-1, 240-pound senior from Louisville, Ky.

"If there's someone on the team more competitive than I am, I don't know about it," he says. "People who I have a special bond with have rubbed off on me, and I've rubbed off on them — **Antonio Thomas** will stay with you all day, so will **Brandon and Deonté Smith** as well as the whole defensive line. That's what keeps the fire burning in me, knowing that I am stepping on the field with a group with that competitive mentality."

It's that competitive side of Thompson that has lifted the inside linebacker from a role player off the bench as a freshman to one of 16 candidates for the Buck Buchanan Award, which is given each year to the top defensive player in NCAA Division I-AA football.

Not only has Thompson collected 79 tackles — which ranks among the top 10 in the Gateway Football Conference — to go along with six stops behind the line of scrimmage, a fumble recovery and an interception, but he filled a new role as the leader of the WKU defense. One of the Toppers' three captains, he has tried to avoid putting extra pressure on himself in order to live up to the expectations of that position.

"I've tried to continue doing what I've done over the past few years," says Thompson. "We have so many good players on this team, it's not like they need a lot of leadership. Sometimes they need a little motivation, and that's what I'm there for."

"I just try to lead by doing my job."

Aukerman says that leadership is the one area where Thompson has grown since the end of his junior campaign.

"The biggest thing that Charles has learned this summer and throughout the fall is how to step up and be a leader. Last year he wasn't looked at as a leader because there were a lot of seniors on the team, but this season he has led by example and been a vocal leader as well."

What Thompson hasn't had to learn about coming into this season was how to make plays. Entering this afternoon's contest against Western Illinois, he needs only nine tackles to become the sixth player in school history with 400 in his career. He is coming off back-to-back 100-tackle campaigns, including posting 159 as a sophomore to lead the 2002 team that won the national championship. In fact, Thompson even held the distinction of recording the most stops by a freshman linebacker in former head coach **Jack Harbaugh's** 14 years on the Hill after finishing with 43 his first year.

But, those first couple of years at WKU were difficult for Thompson, who was not just used to playing regularly, but participating on both sides of the ball. He sat out the 2000 season as a redshirt, then played a backup role the following fall with **Erik Dandy** and **Hayes Thomas** established as the starters.



"On the field, I learned how to play sitting out that year," he says. "Every day in practice I was working against a talented offense. I was also learning off the field too, since it was my first time away from home, especially how to manage my time."

"From the time that I first came to campus, I had other players tell me that I had a chance to be very good. Serving as a backup the next year was motivational for me. As a man, you believe that you are as good as any other man out there with you. I wanted to be on the field, so I used it as motivation to start the following year."

The coaching staff also knew that Thompson had the potential to be a tremendous player, but it was just a matter of where he would fit in. After gaining 1,115 yards and scoring 21 touchdowns as a senior in high school, it looked as if he would come to the Hill to play fullback.

"Charles was a very good football player. We actually noticed him more on the offensive side of the ball," Elson says. "We recruited him as a player who could play on either side of the ball, and he just ended up at linebacker probably because we felt we had a need there at the time."

"When he was redshirting his first year, Charles was one of those guys who the offensive coaches would say in staff meetings couldn't be blocked. That's where you started to notice his competitive fire — sometimes the scout team can get a little bit mundane, but he was one who made the offensive guys better every day and in the process got himself noticed."

The opportunity to play running back was what Thompson was actually looking for during the recruiting process. In fact, when he was on a visit with rival Eastern Kentucky the Colonels hurt their chances at signing the honorable mention all-state selection by failing to offer Thompson an opportunity on offense.

"I was all set to go to Eastern Kentucky even though I had a much better time when I visited WKU," he recalls. "I told their coaching staff I wanted to play running back, but they wanted to hear linebacker. They told me that they were waiting on a running back from Florida, and if he didn't sign they would call me."

"As soon as I got home, I called (former assistant) coach (Andy) Hendel and told him that I was ready to sign with Western."

And what started as just a chance at running the ball has turned into the Hilltoppers finding one of their top stoppers instead. "There is no question that he fits in as one of the best linebackers that we've had," Elson says. "Just look at his numbers and what he has been able to consistently accomplish. We're a better defense when he's on the field — you can see that in the numbers from when he has missed games."

"I think he will go down as one of the better linebackers that's played here in a long time, especially over the last four-to-five years."

Being a part of that tradition is important to Thompson too. But not to the point that he won't help find someone else to help continue it once he has departed the Hill. "I've been trying to teach the younger guys who are watching me now, and I'm confident that they will be as good — if not better — than I have been."

An important cog in a Topper defense that has ranked among the best in Division I-AA since 2000, he has rarely been honored for his individual accomplishments during his career. That hasn't bothered Thompson, who is more concerned with the team's performance, but it should change in the coming weeks as all-conference and All-America teams are announced.

What's more important to Thompson is that he will earn his degree from Western next month before he moves on and begins his postgraduate career. Whether or not that involves professional football — which is something that he will pursue — one can rest assured that Thompson will continue to compete in whatever field he chooses.

"I've been playing football for so long that I am not just going to stop," he says. "Even if it doesn't work out, I know I can go home to Louisville and look to settle down."

Thompson also says that coaching is a possibility, albeit a remote one. Especially with his eyes only on a job with his alma mater, Central High School.

But Aukerman believes that with his temperament and demeanor, it would be an ideal line for Thompson.

"Once Charles gets in the football stadium, he has a different personality — he's all business," he says. "He likes to have fun with the guys and joke around, but once he locks in on football he is a very serious guy. Charles coaches the players with me in my meetings, he has done a tremendous job helping our younger individuals."

For Thompson, there's no better way to get a jump on the competition than getting right down to business.

The Thompson File



Full name: Charles Anthony Thompson, Jr.
Born: Oct. 20, 1981, in Louisville, Ky.
Hometown: Louisville, Ky.
High School: Central
High School Letters: football, baseball

WKU Notebook

Toppers getting lift from special teams

By ROB HERBST

The Daily News

herbst@dailynews.com/783-3238
One of Western Kentucky's most underrated streaks will be on the line this weekend.

The Hilltoppers haven't given up a kickoff or punt return for a touchdown in more than two seasons, when McNeese State's B.J. Sams returned a punt for a 58-yard score on Sept. 28, 2002. When Western visits Southwest Missouri State on Saturday, it will be facing a dangerous special teams unit ranked among the best in I-AA.

Although Southwest Missouri State has returned only one kick for a touchdown, the Bears rank No. 3 in I-AA in average yards per kickoff return, and No. 23 in punt returns. Reumer Steven Rush is averaging more than 15 yards per punt return. "Rush is dangerous," WKU coach David Elson said. "We'll have to do a good job on special teams because Rush is a great athlete. He's quick, fast and changes direction real well."

Western's special teams have paved the way to two of its last three victories. Dennis Mitchell returned a punt for a 68-yard score to break a 10-10 fourth-quarter tie at Northern Iowa and give Western a 17-10 win. Mitchell had a 47-yard punt return and Brian Porter had a 66-yard kickoff return to set up touchdowns in the Hilltoppers' 24-21 victory over Illinois State on Saturday.

"We've got (special teams) guys that can make big plays," WKU



Joe Innel/Daily News

WKU junior Dennis Mitchell returns a punt 47 yards against Illinois State in the second half on Saturday at L.T. Smith Stadium. quarterback Justin Haddix said, "They can allow us to start off hot and get us great field position."

Penalized

One reason Western's offense didn't have its typical yardage production against Illinois State was penal-

ties. The Hilltoppers committed 10 penalties for a season-high 112 yards and finished with only 243 offensive yards in the contest.

Penalties haven't been a problem for Western this year. WKU had committed no more than five penalties in its previous five games and the Hilltoppers had committed the fewest number of penalties in the Gateway.

"The penalties came at such bad times," Elson said. "We had a nice run by Brian Porter that got called back because of a penalty and the penalties were things that we just haven't done (this year)."

When Elson reviewed the tape of Saturday's game, he agreed with the penalties that were called.

"It was well called," Elson said. "There may have been one holding call, but I'm sure there was one that wasn't called and you have that in every game. It was well officiated and it was just poor judgment on our players' part."

Polling

Western Kentucky moved up two spots to No. 5 in the latest poll released by The Sports Network. Southern Illinois remained at No. 1 and received 79 of a possible 108 first-place votes. No. 2 Georgia Southern received 28 first-place votes.

No other Gateway Conference teams are in the poll. Northern Iowa did receive Top 25 votes.

11-2-04

Cavitt finds a home at WKU

By ROB HERBST
The Daily News

Getty Cavitt's decision to drop baseball has become a blessing for Western Kentucky football.

During his days at Owensboro High School, Cavitt didn't imagine he'd play college football. Although he was a three-year starter and a two-time all-state selection, his obsession was with baseball.

Cavitt was a five-year starter at Owensboro, playing the last four years at catcher. When college football programs began gauging his interest in playing on the gridiron, they were turned away.

"I only played football because that's what my friends were playing," Cavitt said. "I thought I'd go play baseball somewhere and (his high school football coach) told schools I was going to play baseball."

Although Cavitt looked destined to play college baseball, Western Kentucky remained interested in him, and the decision has helped Western Kentucky's defense maintain its strong standing.

Cavitt, who was a starting defensive end last season before moving to linebacker this year, is third on the Hilltoppers and 10th in the Gateway Conference with 64 tackles this year.

Cavitt has already recorded two interceptions and was named the Gateway's Defensive Player of the Week after recording a career-high 13 tackles against Illinois State last weekend.

"You couldn't ask him to play the position any better," WKU coach David Elson said. "The guy is a complete football player and he shows every week what kind of athlete he is."

Cavitt eventually decided to play football because his love affair with baseball died. According to Cavitt, he was burned out by the game after spending several summers playing baseball along with games during high school.

But since some colleges assumed he was going to play baseball, his football options weren't as abundant when he considered a sports change during the spring of his senior season at Owensboro.

"I didn't care if I'd pick up another baseball again," Cavitt said. "I was always late coming out to football camp because I was playing in baseball tournaments and stuff. But I just had a rough (senior baseball season) and didn't want to play."

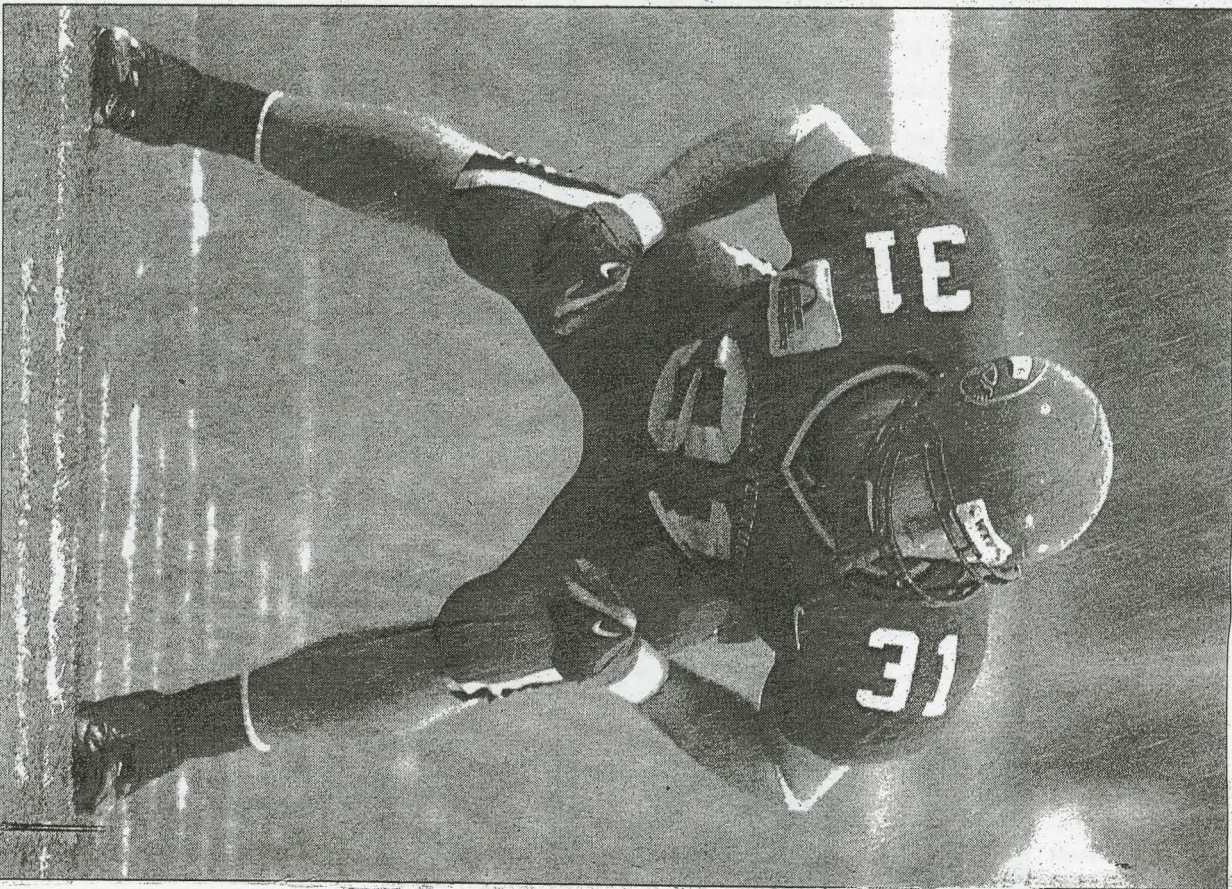
"I was very fortunate that (Western) would still take me."

Although Cavitt didn't originally have a strong interest in football, he did whatever it took to get on the field. That meant switching positions ... not once, not twice, but three times.

Cavitt was originally viewed as a full-back and started three games during his freshman season.

He then switched to inside linebacker in 2002 and the defensive line in 2003, where he started 11 of 13 games.

"That's the biggest thing with Getty — he's persevered through a lot," Elson said. "The perfect scenario is you bring a guy in, he stays at the same position for four years



Joe Imel/Daily News
Western Kentucky linebacker Getty Cavitt gets ready for a play against Indiana State last month. Cavitt was named the Gateway Conference's Defensive Player of the Week after recording 13 tackles against Illinois State last weekend.

and he develops at that position. He never really found a home until last year.

"It's definitely hard to switch so much. Where you could say we could play him at all those spots. It really is a credit to his athleticism and football sense."

Cavitt looked like he found a comfortable spot at the defensive line last year. He finished with 60 tackles and four sacks, plus was Western's most experienced defensive lineman returning this year.

But the 6-foot-1, 240-pound Cavitt offered to move to outside linebacker because he was smaller than most defensive linemen and the Hilltoppers had a hole at outside linebacker.

"I asked (coach David Elson) right after the spring if I could move out there," Cavitt said. "He said, 'We'll see,' and I didn't think it would go past that."

Elson admitted he had to be convinced by WKU assistant coaches that moving Cavitt would be the proper decision. Cavitt was eventually moved to outside linebacker during the middle of August and has become a mainstay in the linebacker corps.

"My stance was that it didn't make any sense to move your best guy at (defensive line) when you didn't have anybody else with significant experience," Elson said.

"But that's why you get a lot of different viewpoints and different take on things. I don't think I probably would have done that myself if somebody didn't suggest it."

Being eight games into the season and with the Hilltoppers sitting at 6-2, what does Elson think now?
"Now you look at it and say, 'Why didn't we do it sooner?'" Elson joked. "It's amazing how quickly he's picked up the position and how well he's playing."

Today's Featured Player 21

Thomas Takes To The Hill

Western Kentucky University offensive lineman **Ryan Thomas** found himself in an interesting position at the beginning of his college career — his pace of life was both slowing down and speeding up at the same time. And there weren't a lot of options to look to on the Hilltopper roster for help.

As a native of the suburbs of Buffalo, N.Y., Thomas was the only player from the Empire State. So he wasn't just making the adjustment to the additional burdens of college life, the 6-foot-3, 300-pound senior from Orchard Park took on the challenge of a completely different lifestyle.

Four-plus years later, Thomas considers the decision to move worth it.

"It was definitely an adjustment at first. Everyone here was different to me, which was kind of hard to accept at first," says Thomas. "But really, I was the one who was different, so I had to learn to fit in."

"It's a faster way of life back home, everything moves quicker. Down here it's slower, people are more relaxed and not uptight. I've learned to like that people aren't pressing all the time."

"When I go home I enjoy seeing my family and friends, but there are definitely things that I don't miss."

Hilltopper head coach **David Elson** has seen the transformation, the ability to adapt, in Thomas, although he says that it was a difficult challenge at first.

"I think the adjustment from the East Coast lifestyle to good-ol' Kentucky was one of the things he struggled with early on. East Coast people typically are a little more outspoken and have a little more personality, and that was probably Ryan in those first couple of years."

Thomas' situation on the field didn't allow for a lot of time to make the adjustment, either. He had played in just one of Western's two shutouts to open the 2000 campaign, but starting center **Joe Guinane** — a junior-college transfer expected to handle the duties all season — was injured at Southeast Missouri Sept. 23, leaving the true freshman to handle the duties the rest of the way.

"One of the big reasons I came to Western was that (former) coach (Jack) Harbaugh said I would have an opportunity to start if I made an impact in camp," says Thomas. "The biggest challenge was learning the offense fast enough — going from high school to college and having only three to four weeks of camp to accomplish that was a real difficult."

"When Joe went down, it was time to go. I felt like I learned everything, so I wasn't even scared. It was just another game to me, even though my heart was racing and I was excited."

A chance to play as a true freshman wasn't the only thing that attracted Thomas to the Hill. Harbaugh's name caught his attention when former defensive coordinator — and New York native — **Andy Hendel** visited Orchard Park High School.

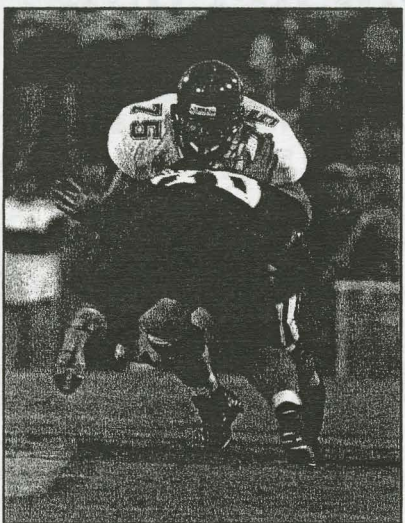
That, as well as the fact that he would get a chance to compete in track as well. Not only was Thomas first-team all-state selection in football, he was twice chosen a NIKE All-American in track, a sport he had earned five letters in. In fact, he was ranked fifth in the nation in both the hammer and weight throws his senior year.

"I had never even heard of Western Kentucky until coach Hendel visited and asked me to come to camp. I had offers from Connecticut and Pittsburgh in football, but they weren't going to let me compete in track," Thomas recalls. "He told me that coach Harbaugh loves guys who do both sports."

"I said, 'Coach Harbaugh? Jim's dad?' He said that was the case, so I decided to take a visit to Western. "It was the last visit that I took. When I came down I was kind of set on either Pitt or New Hampshire, but I really liked the people here. I figured that I liked Bowling Green, so I would come here, compete in football and track, and get a good education."

Guinane's injury left Thomas entrenched as a starter — that is, until he suffered an injury himself. As a sophomore, he started the first six games and saw action in nine contests until appendicitis sidelined him for the rest of the 2001 campaign. A year later, with the depth on Western's front line, he actually sat out as a redshirt as the Hilltoppers went on to win the national championship.

He was still an integral part of the scout team that fall, and would go on in the winter to earn all-Sun Belt



Ryan Thomas — one of two seniors up front for the Hilltoppers — has made the adjustment to living in the South. (photo by Faye Lash)

Conference honors in the weight throw at the indoor championships.

"It was pretty difficult, sitting there watching everyone contribute to a national championship when you were the one who was used to playing," says Thomas, who would also go on to qualify for the NCAA Midwest Regional in the hammer throw during the 2003 outdoor season. "But I knew my role was to prepare the defense week in and week out, so I accepted it and actually found that I enjoyed it. On Tuesdays and Wednesdays the defense knew I was coming to play — that was my game, my time to go all out."

One advantage to sitting out the year for Thomas was that it gave him the ability to learn multiple positions, serving mostly as a tackle on the scout team that fall. Even though he started all 13 games at center in 2003, when **Erik Losey** transferred to the Hill following the season it was Thomas who made a move — to right guard. And, Thomas has taken a snap at tackle in a game this season serving as a temporary fill-in for an injured teammate.

"When I was redshirting, coach Harbaugh told me that it would be a good opportunity to learn other team's schemes and to learn the other line positions, so I took advantage of that," he says. "It still probably took two or three games this year to get used to playing guard in a game."

Offensive line coach **Walter Wells** has Thomas prepared to play anywhere on the line for several reasons. "Ryan is so smart and he studies the game, he is always coming in and watching video. He is not afraid to ask questions, either. It hasn't been a problem knowing his assignments, he has just had to get used to the different techniques at each of the positions."

"He was already a talented lineman when he came here," adds Elson. "Anytime you can play effectively as a freshman, like he did as a true freshman, it tells you that he came with a lot of ability. The biggest thing I've seen regarding Ryan is his maturity level — he has really grown in that area since his first year when he was young and full of energy. He was always a team player who has done what we have asked him to do."

Thomas' growth has led to his role as one of the leaders on the Hilltoppers' 2004 squad. It's a role that he had no problem accepting, although he is more comfortable leading by example than he is as a cheerleader.

"He is a voice of reason with our younger guys," Elson says. "He probably does more behind the scenes sharing his experiences and what he has been through."

Adds Wells: "Ryan leads with his toughness. Every day is a tough day for him physically, but he doesn't gripe or moan about it. He just comes out and goes to work — Ryan does more than he probably should at times."

"He is also so good encouraging the guys. When I have to get into somebody a little bit, he's there to pick them up."

One thing that Thomas' origins have done for Western football off the field, though, is add a new element to the locker room.

"He likes to talk and he has a good sense of humor," says Elson. "Ryan has a variety of different interests — he is the team's meteorologist — who is a well-rounded kid. He can relate to a lot of different guys on our team."

"Ryan hasn't met a stranger, I will say that," Wells says. "When it's time to poke fun and have fun, he is one of the first guys to dish it out. But, he hasn't been teased too much about being from New York."

Thomas has adjusted so well to the slower-paced way of life that he has an interest in remaining in this part of the country following his graduation in May. Life in Bowling Green has been so good that he's torn between finding a job in the Southeast or returning to New York to be close to his family. The only thing that he is sure of is that he would like to work in a field that involves competition.

"Once I got injured, it was a wake-up call. All of your time revolves around school and football," he says. "I thought, 'What am I going to do when I'm finished with football?' I'm a competitive person, I need to do something along the line of sales management."

That time will have to wait for Thomas, though, as the Hilltoppers enter tonight's game against Illinois State in second place in the Gateway Football Conference standings with a chance to advance to the NCAA playoffs for the fifth consecutive year.

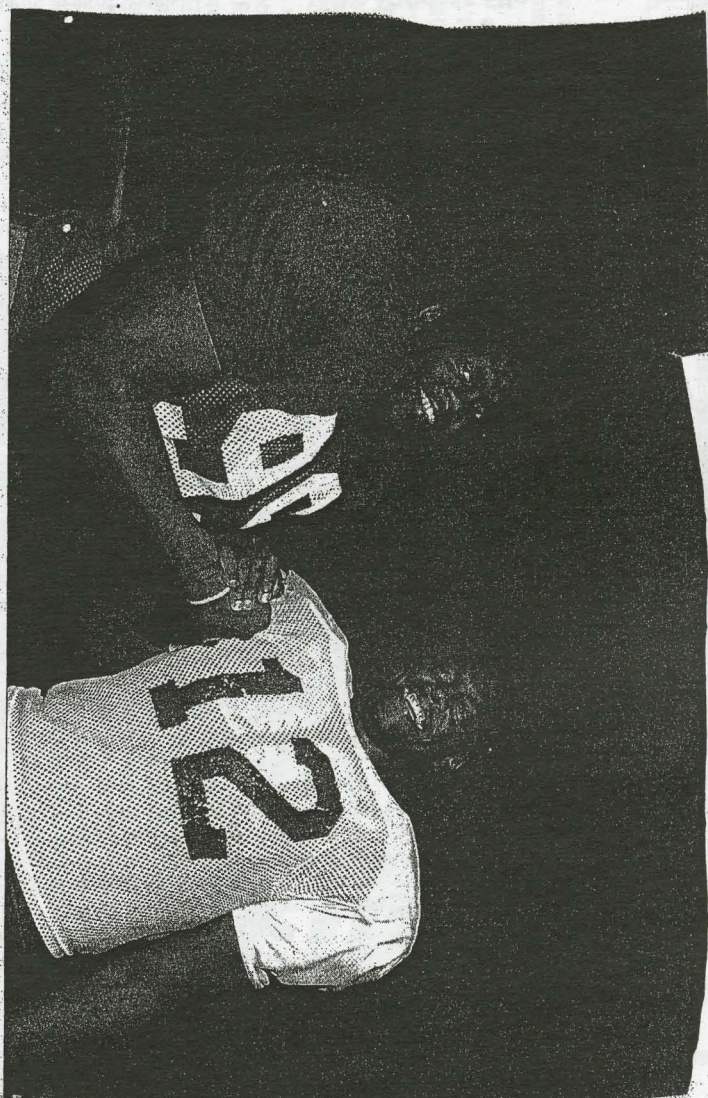
Whether it's on the field or in the community, Thomas has proven that he has the ability to adapt to any situation.

The Thomas File



Full name: Ryan Michael Thomas
Born: Nov. 6, 1980, in New Fane, N.Y.
Hometown: Orchard Park, N.Y.
High School: Orchard Park
High School Letters: football, track

Western Kentucky defensive lineman Charlie Phillips (left) and his brother, tight end Karl Phillips, are both starting for the Hilltoppers. Karl is a 24-year-old redshirt sophomore that originally walked on with the Hilltoppers.



Brothers together at WKU

By ROB HERBST
The Daily News

If it wasn't for little brother Charlie Phillips, Western Kentucky tight end Karl Phillips might be still working two jobs to survive instead of playing college football.

Karl Phillips was working days at a Nike Factory Store and nights at Wal-Mart after graduating from high school in 1998.

After the 2001 football season, the Hilltoppers recruited defensive lineman Charlie Phillips and knew nothing of his older brother.

When Charlie suggested to Western that his brother join him on the team, WKU allowed Karl to walk on.

Playing college football was like a pipe dream," Karl said. "I always had intentions, but I wasn't exactly pushing it."

Karl also got the opportunity because he stayed in shape. Since WKU coach David Elson only knew Karl because of his brother, Elson never saw any tape of Karl's playing days from high school in Kissimmee, Fla.

"You just saw him physically and he looked like a heck of an athlete," Elson said. "And since his brother was a scholarship guy, you think apples don't fall

far from the tree. All the information we had said there's nothing wrong with taking this chance and giving him an opportunity."

While Charlie lived up to expectations and blossomed into a starting defensive lineman for the Hilltoppers, Karl is now in his second season as a starting tight end.

Karl savors his starting role because he didn't think he'd have another chance to play college football.

He originally walked on at Georgia Southern after graduating from high school. But family issues piled on Karl and he left GSU almost immediately.

Karl's son, Dylon, was born and his father, Vernon, was suffering from failing kidneys.

"I could tell it hurt him a whole lot not to play football," Charlie said. "I know he wanted to play."

Supporting his family by working two jobs became a big priority than playing college football for Karl.

"I just had a lot of things come up and it was hard," Karl said. "Responsibilities had to be taken care of. A lot of people think playing football and going to school is tough, but it's nothing compared to working and struggling for a living."

The Phillips' unique situation had led to an unusual chain of command. Although Karl has always been big brother to 20-year-old Charlie, younger brother has seniority at school.

Charlie is a junior and Karl is a 24-year-old redshirt sophomore who sat out the 2002 season.

"It's a great connection that we have," Charlie said. "A lot of other schools wouldn't give Karl a chance, so I got excited when Western did. I don't think I mentioned (Karl) much to other coaches that were recruiting me, but coach Elson asked me more in-depth about family."

10-18-11

Now, as Western's special teams captain, Claybourn works closely with freshmen kickers **Chris James** and **Tanner Stewart**. He has mentored the duo as part of the Hilltoppers' Big Brother program, and helps run drills that the kickers take part in while practice is going on.

"Being voted a captain shows the respect Brian's teammates have for him because he has produced at his position," says Elson. "More importantly, off the field, the consistency of his work ethic over the last four-plus years and his attitude — he has such an even keel, he never gets too high or too low — shows Brian's teammates his maturity level. He's someone the guys have gone to, like I have, for input to try and help in any way."

Claybourn arrived on the Hill unsure of what his role would be. He had served as both Reitz' punter and kicker, and although most of his high school honors came in the former role, Western was looking for a placekicker following the departure of All-American **Jeff Poisel** (Ogletree had served as the Toppers' punter the previous two seasons). The most difficult time for Claybourn was his first year — he sat out as a redshirt after **Peter Martinez** won the kicking job in the preseason. "It was definitely hard on me when I first figured out I was going to redshirt, especially because I had come in thinking I might handle both jobs. Since I was a little kid I had always done something all the time."

"It ended up working out all right because Peter had a good year and we got by with Alan punting and playing wide receiver. It was a good year for me to sit back, watch and learn."

Since then, the 6-foot-1, 185-pound senior has filled another role for the Hilltoppers — as one of the best punters in the Gateway Football Conference. Claybourn has been selected to the all-league team in each of his three seasons, including picking up first-team accolades following last year, and was a member of the conference's All-Newcomer Team in 2001. He led all NCAA Division I-AA freshmen punters in average that season, while this fall he ranks among the top 10 in the country with an average of 43.36 yards per kick entering today's contest with Indiana State.

In fact, Claybourn is on pace to set both the season and career records on the Hill for punting average.

And it turns out that he was correct in his beliefs when he arrived on campus. For the last two years, Claybourn has also taken care of the Hilltoppers' kickoff duties.

"We're fortunate to have both **Craig Aukerman** and **Stuart Holt** working with special teams, as well as the mentoring of **Butch Gilbert** — Brian has had some good eyes and some good coaching over the years," says Elson. "But I think the most significant thing has been his work at Ray Guy's camps over the summer. I think he has learned a lot about what he needed to improve by doing that. And anytime you teach something, you understand it better — the best way to learn something is to teach it."

Claybourn's improvement in his time on the Hill has led to the possibility of continuing his career in the professional ranks next fall. Although it is something that he thinks about from time to time, there aren't any special drills he can do to improve his chances of catching on with a team.

"Right now my number one goal is to help us win games, but it is always in the back of your mind" he says. "But there's nothing I can do different to prepare for it, the key is to just continue to be consistent. That's what the scouts are looking at."

"The feedback from scouts has been positive," adds Elson. "The NFL isn't any different than college — everyone wants to try and get a kicker for as little as they possibly can. Typically kickers are signed as free agents. One of the scouts said to me, which I thought tells you how tough it is, 'There are only 32 punters in the NFL.'"

"I think he has a chance. Brian has all the tools and the athleticism, it's just about the timing and finding the right fit — being in the right place at the right time."

Whenever the day comes that his kicking career ends, athletics will likely not exit the picture. A marketing major who is expected to graduate in December, Claybourn has worked with Western's athletic marketing and promotions department in the past and is interested in either working with sports marketing or sales.

He's intelligent enough to hold his own off the field, too. Last year he was selected to Gateway Conference's All-Academic second team.

Often times kickers are lost in their own world, however, the Hilltoppers have been fortunate the last four years to have the services of the levelheaded Claybourn.

"Brian's a normal guy who could fit in at any position," Elson says. "Sometimes kickers are just kickers and that's all that they do, but Brian was able to average 20 points a game in high school basketball."

"He's just one of the guys who's able to joke with the best of them and can hold his own if there's any type of competition."

The Claybourn File



Full name: Brian Kent Claybourn
Born: Oct. 21, 1981, in Evansville, Ind.
Hometown: Evansville, Ind.
High School: Reitz
High School Letters: football, basketball, soccer, track

Hilltopper Punter Isn't A Chip Off The Stereotypical Block

The stereotype in football is that kickers are in their own world, both on the field and in their minds. They are generally not regarded as athletes, and a lot of times they are forced to practice on their own while the offensive and defensive units prepare for the upcoming game against scout teams.

Brian Claybourn is not your stereotypical kicker.

After all, how many kickers have earned all-state honors as a high school basketball player?

Claybourn, a native of Evansville, Ind., grew up playing basketball as well as soccer before putting his talents to use on the football field. In fact, it wasn't until he was voted all-conference as a punter following his junior season that he first had serious thoughts about competing collegiately as a kicker.

The calls from coaches at Big Ten schools didn't hurt in that decision either.

"My whole high school career up to the middle of my junior season was focused on basketball. Football was something on the side that I could do just because I had a good leg and always played soccer," he says. "It was at that point that people started looking at me and I started to get phone calls. It puts it in perspective when you're getting interest from lower Division I schools in basketball and people from the Big Ten are calling about football."

Fortunately for the program at Western Kentucky University, those offers would eventually fall through. The coaching staff was aware of Claybourn's abilities thanks to former Hilltopper **Bill Hape**, a letterwinner from 1967-70 whose son Andy also played four years at WKU.

"Bill was a good friend of (former) coach (Jack) Harbaugh and a friend of the program," says current Topper head coach **David Elson**. "He had recommended kids from Evansville over the years. We were looking for a punter, and Bill had called coach to suggest Brian."

"Once we got that tip and began the process, we found out what an athlete he was. That was something that I have learned from coach Harbaugh — you like to see guys who play multiple sports at any position. It tells you he's a competitor and that he's been in pressure situations. We liked that Brian was an athlete and not just a kicker."

Claybourn is the first to admit that the coaching staff was correct in seeing that competitive side to his personality. As the younger of two boys — J.P. is two years older — he grew up competing with his brother in every sport they participated in. To the point where Claybourn didn't care much for his sibling until he went away to college.

"My brother and I really didn't like each other in high school. A lot of times we were competing for the same spot," says Claybourn. "When he went away to college, we both realized that it was stupid to act that way and that we needed each other."

"I definitely consider myself a competitive person. Now it's more about competing against myself since there isn't a head-to-head battle like a cornerback against a wide receiver."

It was trust in another former Western player from Evansville, defensive lineman **Mike Volkman**, that helped convince Claybourn to come to the Hill.

"Mike was a factor in coming down here, he was already on campus and is one of my brother's best friends. Having someone to talk to about the program that I knew definitely helped," Claybourn says. "When I came on my visit, hanging out with Mike, **Alan Ogletree**, **Brock Baker** and **Brad Davis** gave me a different feeling than going to some of those Big Ten schools. You could see that the people at Western were more like a family, they cared more than just about winning and losing."

It didn't take long for the roles to reverse, Claybourn has served as a host and mentor since arriving on the Hill. One year after coming to WKU, he was instrumental in convincing **Bill Hewig** — a former teammate at Reitz High School — to join the program.

Hewig has ended up serving as a long snapper for Claybourn, and this season has started the last five games at left guard on the offensive line.

"When he came on his visit and stayed with me, it was the same relationship that I had with Mike," he says. "You have somebody that you know is not going to lie to you or feed you a line, you'll get an honest answer."



One of the top punters in NCAA Division I-AA football, senior Brian Claybourn will leave the Hill with his name etched in the Western record books. (photo by Dr. James Robinson)

Scott's question leads to starts

By ROB HERBST
The Daily News

All Western Kentucky's Aaron Scott was looking for was an answer.

The sophomore wide receiver thought he performed well enough during spring drills and fall camp to earn a starting role. But when Scott saw other receivers getting more playing time in the Hilltoppers' season opener, he got the nerve to ask WKU offensive coordinator T.J. Weist why he wasn't a first-string player.

"I was a little bit discouraged," Scott said. "I thought I'd get my chance as long as I kept working hard, but I thought I was being overlooked."

Little did Scott know that a question about playing time was what Weist wanted to hear.

"It showed me it meant a lot to him," Weist said. "He wanted to be a starter. I think you challenge players in a lot of different ways and see how important it is to them. One of the ways is to see how competitive they are when you move them around in the depth chart and you see how they react and how much it means to them."

Ever since Scott didn't grab a reception in the Hilltoppers' opener at Kansas State, he's progressed as an offensive weapon for Western. He caught three passes for 32 yards against Eastern Kentucky last month and topped that against Southern Illinois last weekend, when he caught a team-high five catches for 68 yards.

He's also started the last two contests alongside leading receiver Maurice Perkins.

"I've been trying to impress coaches," Scott said. "I was finally given a chance and I wanted to make sure I made it count. Things started off slow this year, but it's definitely picked up."

Odds weren't in Scott's favor in getting a starting role. He arrived at Western in 2002 as a lightly recruited walk-on from Nashville's Hillsboro High School. After redshirting a season, Scott was only a scout-team player and still a walk-on last season.

Western had receiver spots open this year when its 1-2 receiver punch of Casey Rooney and Shannon Hayes wrapped up their careers last season. The two combined for more than 1,500 yards last year.

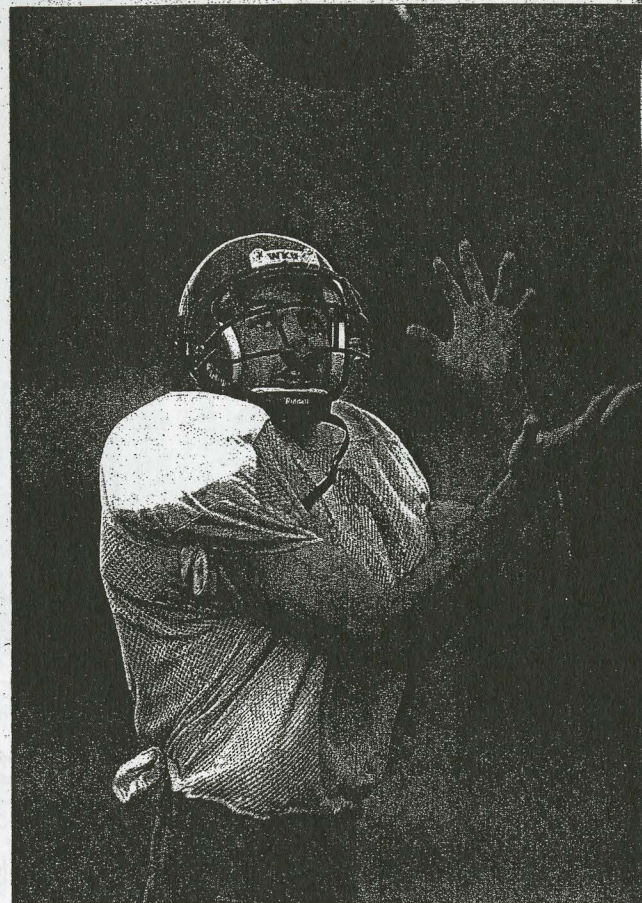
But WKU had a number of candidates for its top two spots and Scott may have had one strike against him.

"I didn't come out with a chip on my shoulder, but I think I was overlooked because I was a walk-on and had to do everything to beat the scholarship guys out," Scott said.

Weist could relate to how Scott felt, but wasn't going to give Scott or any walk-on any sympathy. Like Scott, Weist was a walk-on wide receiver at Alabama during his college career.

"I don't favor walk-ons. I actually expect more of them because I went through it," Weist said. "More is expected of a walk-on if they want to produce. If we have a scholarship guy, we're going to invest more in him because we've got (scholarship) money and time invested in him. They have to do everything better than everyone else."

According to Weist, players like Scott are rare. Weist said he was one of a group of 65 walk-ons that began their Alabama



Western Kentucky sophomore wide receiver Aaron Scott looks in a pass Tuesday during practice at L.T. Smith Stadium.

career in 1984. In a four-year span, Weist was the only walk-on still with the Crimson Tide.

Weist estimated no more than 10 percent of walk-ons at Western or any other Division I school stick with the program.

"Most walk-ons don't understand what it takes," Weist said. "They don't understand what it takes to beat out a scholarship player. I want a walk-on that wants to give his heart and soul to this program, not one that thinks we owe him something. I see so many come through and think we owe him something."

Because a scholarship player will naturally get more notice than a walk-on, it took Scott some time to gain attention.

While he may not have felt like he was being looked at last year, Western head coach David Elson knew about Scott last season.

"He was on the scout team and I used to joke that all he does is catch passes on our No. 1 defense," Elson said. "Aaron is a guy that's shown passion and persistence. It's definitely paid off too."

Scott has also won the confidence of

Weist.

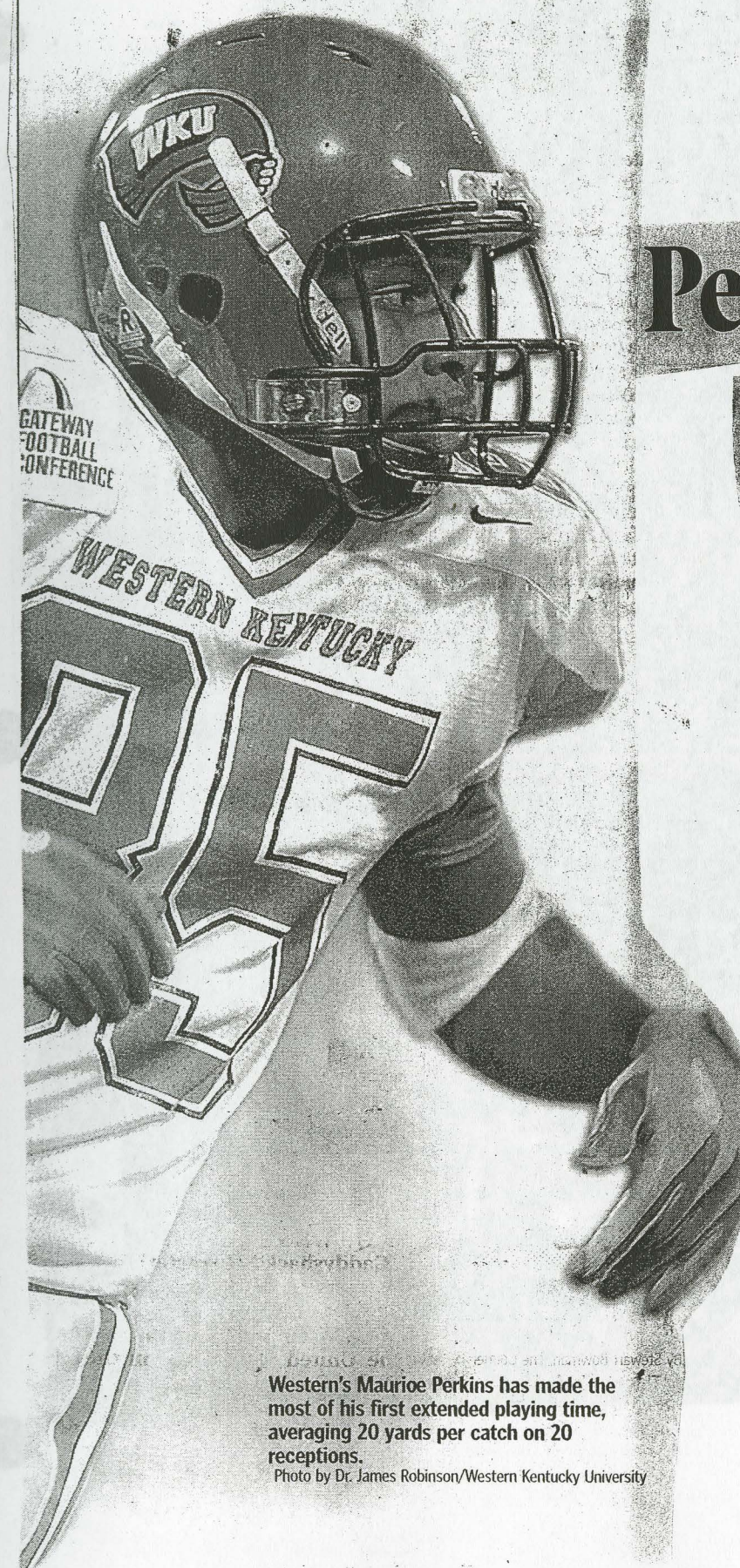
"He knows what he's doing and that's the biggest thing with me," Weist said. "I can trust him to do the right thing. I can see he's more dependable at making plays. He catches the football, makes the plays when he has to, blocks and plays with toughness."

It doesn't mean Scott has a lock on a starting spot. He has the second most catches of any WKU receiver, but other players alongside Scott are gunning for starting roles. True freshmen Curtis Hamilton and Cory Clemons have both shown promise.

Hamilton already has 116 yards on only six catches and Clemons had 78 yards and three catches against Youngstown State before suffering a groin injury.

Western has also shown that no starter at the position is safe. Four different players have started in Scott's spot over the first six games this year.

"There's always somebody working just as hard as me trying to move up," Scott said. "Coaches tell us every day that the position is not locked. You've got to keep working hard because everybody is fighting for it all the time."



Perkins is quite a catch for Western

Western's Maurice Perkins has made the most of his first extended playing time, averaging 20 yards per catch on 20 receptions.

Photo by Dr. James Robinson/Western Kentucky University

10-20-04

By Michael Grant
mgrant@courier-journal.com
The Courier-Journal

Maurice Perkins believed he was a Division I football player even when no one else did. He has gone from an Indianapolis high schooler that no program seriously recruited to an emerging star wide receiver for I-AA Western Kentucky.

From walk-on to wow.

A guy who didn't catch a pass last year is tied for the Gateway Conference lead in receiving yards (401). The junior will try to help the fourth-ranked Hilltoppers (4-1, 2-0) to their fifth straight victory tonight at top-ranked Southern Illinois (5-1, 2-0).

Western might have to pass more with starting tailback Lermon Moore out with a hamstring injury.

In last weekend's 17-10 victory at Northern Iowa, Perkins set career highs with seven catches for 141 yards. His father watched this unfold from the stands at the UNI-Dome.

Alvin Perkins said his son didn't take an easy path to success.

"It was a fantastic moment," he said. "It's gratifying that he stumbled onto a school like Western Kentucky. He fits right in. It brought tears to my eyes seeing him playing this level of college football. It's been overwhelming."

The new Big Man on the Bowling Green campus stands 5 feet 9 and 170 pounds. Perkins is soft-spoken and humble — for good reason. It was only two years ago when he came to WKU as an unknown from Division II St. Joseph's (Ind.) just asking for a chance.

Perkins was so far off the radar screen that neither he nor WKU coach David Elson realized that they shared the same high school alma mater until Elson saw him wearing an Indianapolis Cathedral T-shirt.

"It's been great," Perkins said. "It feels good knowing that the coach has faith in you."

Perkins had the kind of high school resume that seemingly

would warrant attention. He was a cornerback for Indianapolis Cathedral, which won two state championships during his stay. But Perkins tore his hamstring while participating in track prior to his senior year. The injury limited him in his final season. When his high school career was over, he had no Division I scholarship offers.

His only options were St. Joseph's and some Division III schools.

He watched his teammate, defensive end Mathias Kiwanuka, go to Boston College. Offensive lineman Rufus Sanders and tailback Otis Shannon went to Western. After playing one season at St. Joseph's, Sanders and Shannon urged him to give Western a try.

Perkins walked on at Western and worked himself up the depth chart as a wide receiver during the 2003 season. The Hilltoppers also had senior receivers Casey Rooney and Shannon Hayes, but Perkins became too good to ignore.

During a night practice, he made a catch that made Elson take notice.

"He jumped up high, caught it, kept his feet in bounds," he said. "The next day in our staff meeting I told our coaches, 'We're going to have to take a look at Maurice Perkins. He's making catches.'"

Perkins earned a spot on the travel team and saw limited action. He didn't catch a pass until this season's opener against

Kansas State when he had five for 126 yards against the then-No.12 ranked team in Division I-A.

Western lost 27-13, but Perkins showed that he would help ease the loss of Rooney and Hayes. He has 20 receptions, and his 20.0 yards per catch average is on par with what Rooney (18.2) and Hayes (20.2) did last season.

Quarterback Justin Haddix is not surprised. He said Perkins made an impression on him during seven-on-seven drills over the summer.

"He's made a lot of big plays," the sophomore said. "He's making the most of his opportunity."

Alvin Perkins said Western has only begun to see what his son can do.

"I've told him, 'This is the moment, you've been waiting for all your life,'" he said.

Other games today:

► **Eastern Kentucky (2-3, 2-1) at Southeast Missouri (1-4, 1-1):** Eastern leads the series 12-2, but SEMO has won the past two meetings, including 41-38 last year. This could be another shootout. The Colonels are averaging 42.5 points over their past two games, and SEMO is averaging 39.5 over the same span.

► **Murray State (3-3, 2-1) at Eastern Illinois (2-3, 1-1):** With Murray tailbacks Ron Lane and Nick Turner banged up, sophomore Chad Cook will look for his third straight 100-yard game.

Southern Illinois rushed for 310 yards and averaged 5.7 yards a carry. But Jacobs was, literally, the biggest problem for Western.

On several carries, the Hilltoppers had trouble taking down Jacobs.

"He was huge," WKU safety Marion Rumph said. "I think the only thing we could do was take his legs out. We did that some times, but then we hit him high and he broke a few tackles."

Holts debuts

Western Kentucky linebacker Deion Holts made his Hilltopper debut on Saturday. The transfer from Kentucky and former Warren Central product spent most of his time on special teams, but was inserted at outside linebacker in the fourth quarter.

Holts finished with one tackle in his brief action.

No more Gateway hopes

Western has always been in contention for the Gateway Conference crown since entering the league in 2001, but has never won the outright. The Hilltoppers did share the conference title in 2002, but didn't receive the Gateway's automatic bid into the I-AA playoffs.

By losing to top-ranked SIU, which stands alone in the league as an undefeated team, Elson concedes winning the title outright isn't currently realistic. "These guys will be tough to beat with their remaining schedule," Elson said. "I'd say winning the Gateway outright is a tough thing to accomplish now."

Porter was close to becoming only the second running back to finish with 100 yards against the Salukis this year.

Porter had 90 yards after the third quarter, but because the Hilltoppers were in catch-up mode during the fourth quarter, they rarely ran the ball.

Freshman Stephen Willis, who backed up Porter, finished with 49 yards on eight carries. "Both those guys are young," Haddix said. "For being so young, they really showed some nice things against a good defense."

Jacobs powers SIU

The Hilltoppers saw enough of the Salukis' Brandon Jacobs last year and too much of him on Saturday.

Jacobs was wearing an Auburn uniform last season when he rushed for 103 yards and a touchdown on only 10 carries last year. Western thought it had seen the last of the bruising running back, but Jacobs transferred to SIU during the offseason.

The 6-foot-4, 255-pound running back rushed for 97 yards and three touchdowns on 19 carries.

"He seems to play well against us," WKU coach David Elson said. "He got back on track. They've got a stable of running backs and we saw all of them tonight."



Steve Jahnke/Special to the Daily News
Western Kentucky's Steven Willis follows his blocker during Saturday's loss to Southern Illinois.

BIG RED BONUS

WKU's Thomas has his pride tested

By ROB HERBST
The Daily News

Whenever Western Kentucky cornerback Antonio Thomas notices a pass aimed in his direction, he's personally insulted.

Thomas doesn't understand why a quarterback would dare throw toward him. But when it has happened this year, Thomas often takes offense with a drive-ending interception.

"It's a smack in my face," Thomas said. "They test my pride every time they put the ball in the air my way. And anytime they do that, I'm going to go get it."

In five games this season, Thomas has made opposing quarterbacks pay for those perceived smacks to the face. The Louisville native already has five interceptions.

Thomas is currently third in the country with an interception per game and he's picked off a pass in his last four games.

Thomas' interceptions have also come at critical times. He's already intercepted two passes in the end zone, including last weekend at Northern Iowa, that have ended almost certain scoring drives.

"Gosh, he's been solid," WKU coach David Elson said. "He's been there when we needed him and it seems like he's just always been in position."

After the Hilltoppers' 17-10 win at Northern Iowa, Elson said Thomas had been playing about as well as any cornerback he had seen at WKU, a strong statement since former WKU cornerbacks Joseph Jefferson and Bobby Sippio are now in the NFL.

If Thomas continues his pace of racking up interceptions, he'll have a fact that would allow him to be in the same company with WKU's best cornerbacks. Sippio currently holds the WKU record for interceptions in a season with 10. Sippio accomplished that in 2000 over a 12-game season.

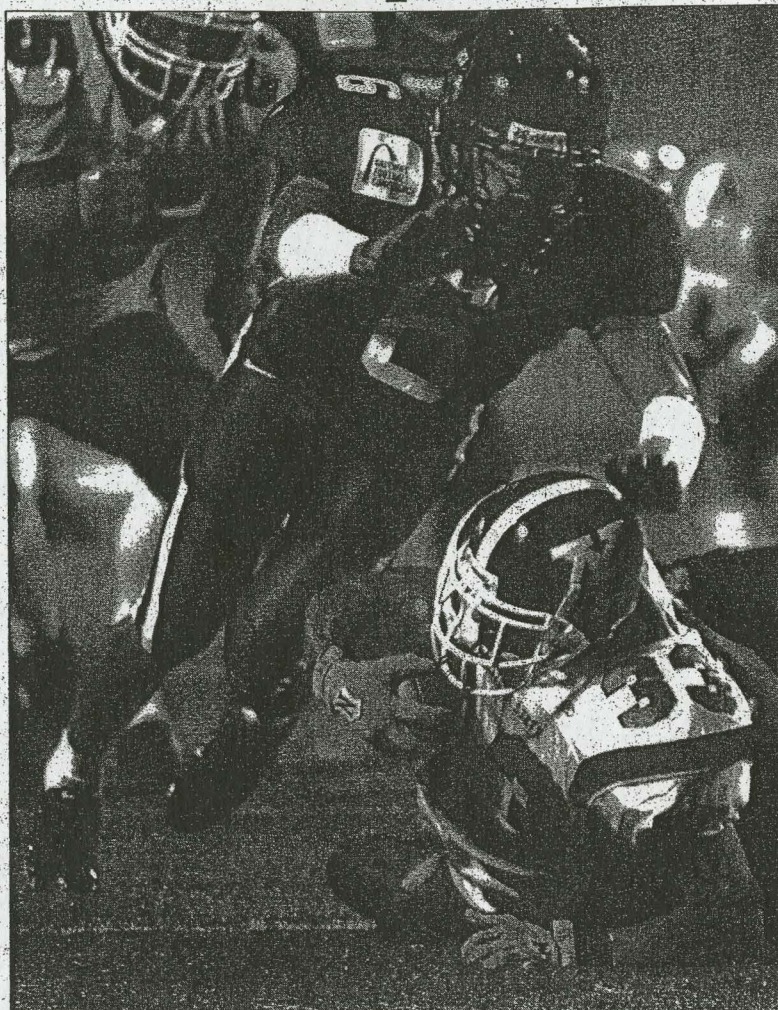
Thomas is already halfway home to tying the record heading into the No. 4 Hilltoppers' battle at No. 1 Southern Illinois on Saturday and WKU still has more than half of its regular season remaining plus possible playoff games.

"My teammates have talked about it and I just laugh and giggle," Thomas said. "They know all about it and I know about it too. I want (the record), but I'm not going to force anything and just play my role."

Thomas would need some help in breaking the record. He'll need some more accommodating quarterbacks to insult him. Ironically, several of his interceptions have been on the same pass route from opponents - a fade route directed into the corner of the end zone.

So far it hasn't worked. Thomas picked off one Eric Sanders pass on that pattern last weekend and nearly had a second.

"It's funny," Thomas said. "They've got to watch the same film we watch. They try the same fade route, but I don't think I'll be seeing any more fade routes in the red



Trevor Frey/Daily News
Western Kentucky cornerback Antonio Thomas assists on a tackle during the Hilltoppers' win over Youngstown State earlier this season.

zone. But if they keep throwing it, ooh I'm going to try my best to go get it."

Part of Thomas' ability to intercept passes is credited to his size. At 6-foot-2, 200 pounds, Thomas is larger than most wide receivers he goes against and bigger than Western's most recent starting cornerbacks. Along with being bigger, Thomas also has the athletic ability to match receivers.

"Three years ago we had the big corners (with Sippio and Jefferson), but have had smaller guys (Jeremy Chandler and Carl Birts) the last two years," Elson said. "Antonio brings a combination. He can run as well as any of those guys, but still has that size and range."

Thomas started most of last season, but didn't start at cornerback. Because Chandler and Birts were mainstays at cornerback for the Hilltoppers, Thomas played at both safety positions.

It didn't go as well as he had wanted.

After starting the first nine games last year, Thomas lost his starting spot and didn't start three of the last four games last season.

The demotion became a motivation for Thomas this year and also keeps him humble even as he's on pace for a record-breaking year.

"That lit a huge fire under me," Thomas said. "I wanted to play but coaches went with the one that was producing the most, so I couldn't complain. But it makes you real humble. You don't have chumps (in second-string roles) behind you, so you always have to play a complete game."

But now that Thomas is playing cornerback instead of safety, he feels at home.

"It's a lot better position for me," Thomas said. "There's less thinking and more reacting going on. And there's a lot of banging going on at safety. Tackling and all that wasn't my strength. I'm better with the ball in the air."

Healthy Smith now producing

By ROB HERBST
The Daily News

Western Kentucky linebacker Deonte Smith might not be superstitious, but it wouldn't hurt to carry a piece of wood to knock on at all times.

Since Smith began his college career at Indiana, injuries have hampered the product of Louisville's St. Xavier High School. He was expected to start his sophomore season at IU, but those hopes ended when a lymph nodes infection required him to have neck surgery just before the season started.

After transferring to Western following his sophomore season, hamstring injuries plagued him during the past two spring camps and last season, when he started only five games.

Now in his senior season, Smith has stayed healthy through the first four games, and has made an immediate impact as a starting inside linebacker.

"I never felt bad about my situation," Smith said. "I've tried not to even think about it. It's a blessing to even play this game and there's a lot of people that have it worse than me."

Now that he's healthy, Smith has been able to showcase his talents, especially against Youngstown State. Smith was named the Gateway Conference's Defensive Player of the Week after returning an interception for a touchdown, recovering a fumble and added 12 tackles.

Smith's effort also led to national honors. He was named the Defensive Player of the Week by both I-AA.org and Hansen's Football Gazette.

It also won Smith some claim to fame within the program. Western uses a points system on defense, rewarding players a certain number of points for defensive statistics - sort of the Hilltoppers' version of Fantasy Football.

Smith racked up 65 points, a new WKU record.

"He's just thrived this year," WKU coach David Elson said. "No question, he's been one of our most consistent and improved players."

Smith has Western feeling good about the inside linebacker position now, but Elson admits he had some questions before fall camp began.

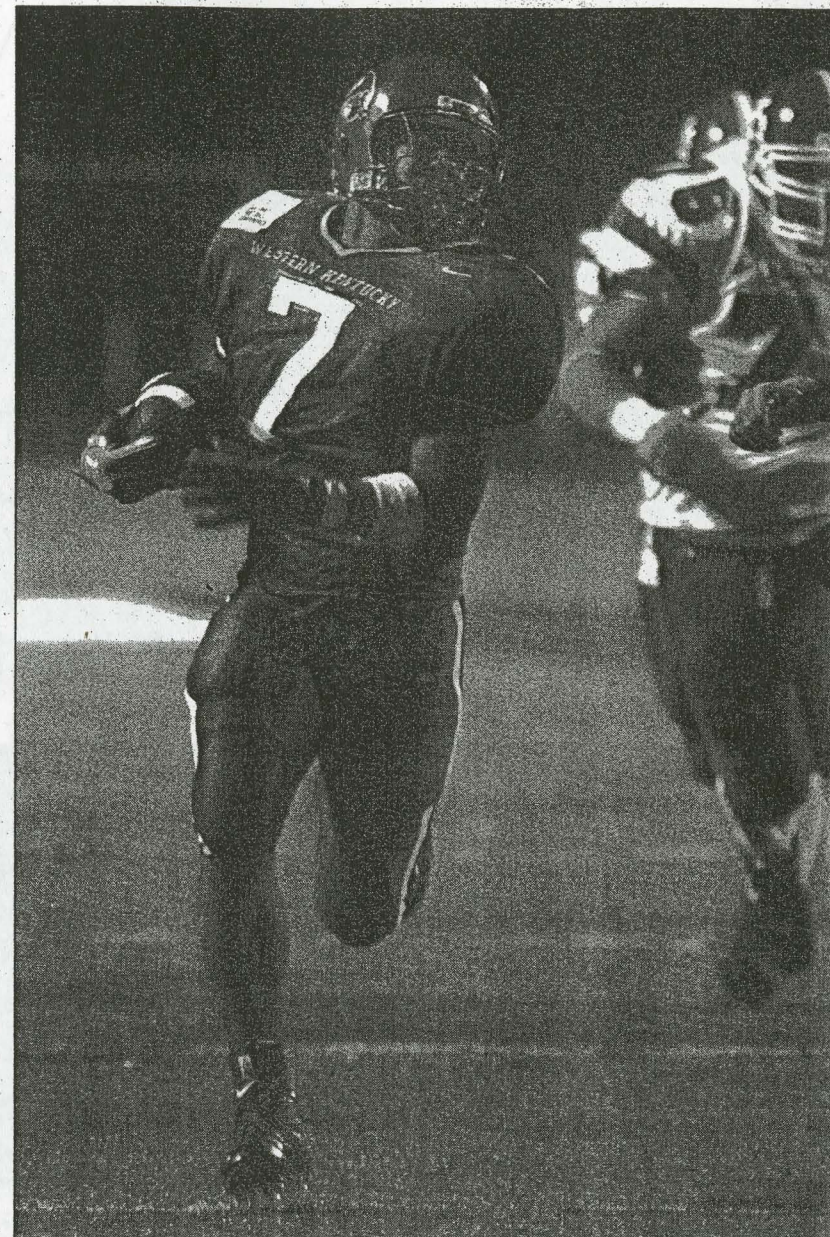
Smith spent most of his time at outside linebacker this year and was pegged to replace All-American Erik Dandy this season. Smith was supposed to get acclimated to the position this spring, but instead missed most of spring ball with a hamstring injury.

That forced him to learn playing the position in a cram session during fall camp.

"We went into camp asking, 'Is Deonte going to be able to do it?'" Elson said. "We thought he'd be a good replacement for Erik, but it was frustrating because we just didn't get to see much of him in the spring."

The position change didn't bother Smith.

"I liked it a lot better," Smith said. "I'm not the biggest guy out there and playing



Trevor Frey/Daily News
Deonte Smith returns an interception for a touchdown in the Hilltoppers' 44-19 win over Youngstown State at L.T. Smith Stadium last Saturday.

outside linebacker (in WKU's 3-4) defense is almost like being a stand-up defensive lineman. I didn't like wrestling with those tight ends. At this position I'm more free."

The position change is a closer return home for Smith. During his first two seasons at Indiana, Smith played at middle linebacker.

But his situation at IU began to deteriorate when IU coach Cam Cameron was fired after his freshman season.

Smith played one season under current coach Gerry DiNardo, but wanted to leave the program after his sophomore year.

"I figured I'd give it a shot with him, but then I felt it wasn't the best place for me," Smith said.

Smith began looking at new schools

immediately after his football season was over. It also happened to be the week Western was preparing for its I-AA national championship game against McNeese State in 2002.

"He played running back in high school and we just knew he was a heck of an athlete," Elson said. "He came down during the playoffs and I'm sure that didn't hurt in getting him here."

Also helping was current WKU offensive coordinator T.J. Weist, who was at Indiana during Smith's freshman season.

"I kept in contact with him and just felt Western was the place for me," Smith said. "The national championship got me real excited about coming here and I knew I wanted to be here."

Team
Southern Illinois
SMS,
Indiana State
Western Kentucky
Illinois State
Western Illinois
Youngstown State
Northern Iowa
Last week
Western Kentucky
SMS 36, Western
Southern Illinois
Indiana State 41
This week
Saturday, Oct.
Western Kentucky
Indiana State at
SMS at Illinois
Southern Illinois

Team
Total offense
1) Southern Illinois
2) Western Illinois
3) Illinois State
4) SMS
5) Western Kentucky

Rushing offense
1) Southern Illinois
2) Western Illinois
3) Western Kentucky
4) SMS
5) Youngstown State

Passing offense
1) Illinois State
2) Southern Illinois
3) Indiana State
4) Western Illinois
8) Western Kentucky

Total defense
1) Southern Illinois
2) Northern Iowa
3) Western Kentucky
4) Illinois State
5) Youngstown State

Rushing defense
1) Southern Illinois
2) Illinois State
3) Northern Iowa
4) Western Kentucky
5) Indiana State

Passing defense
1) Western Illinois
2) Northern Iowa
3) Youngstown State
4) Southern Illinois
5) Western Kentucky

Turnover margin
1) Western Kentucky
2) Indiana State
3) SMS
4) Southern Illinois
5) Western Illinois

Clemmons comes out of nowhere for WKU

By OJ STAPLETON
The Daily News

ofstapleton@dailynews.com/783-3239
True freshman, Cory Clemmons, wasn't even on the Western Kentucky depth chart prior to Saturday's game against Youngstown State, but that didn't keep him from being the Hilltoppers' leading receiver.

Clemmons, a native of Valdosta, Ga., had three catches for 78 yards, including a 54-yarder.

"We hadn't seen a lot of him and he made some big plays," WKU coach David Elson said. "It's good to see guys like that get in the

mix."

Clemmons had been out the first five weeks of the season with a shoulder injury, but wasn't slowed at all on Saturday.

"I was able to come back and start practicing again last week," Clemmons said. "I wanted to make sure that when I did start playing that I was ready, so I learned all the plays and made sure I was prepared."

He was thrust into the spotlight immediately.

Rather than working Clemmons into the lineup, Elson surprised him by starting Clemmons in his college

debut.

"It was a shock to me," Clemmons said. "I was just glad I was able to make some plays and help us win the game."

Elson, wasn't shocked by Clemmons' output.

"We knew he was a very good athlete and he put up some good numbers in high school at wide receiver, so that's his natural position," Elson said. "We knew it was just a matter of time until he was ready to get out there for us."

Hold on Moore
Starting running back Letron

pushed for."

Moore did get a measure of redemption when he finally got back in the game midway through the fourth quarter, he went 29 yards for a touchdown.

"That was a huge weight off my shoulders after those two fumbles," Moore said. "I knew I was going to come back in eventually, they just told me to go over and clear my head for a while."

Moore finished the game with 144 yards on 16 carries.

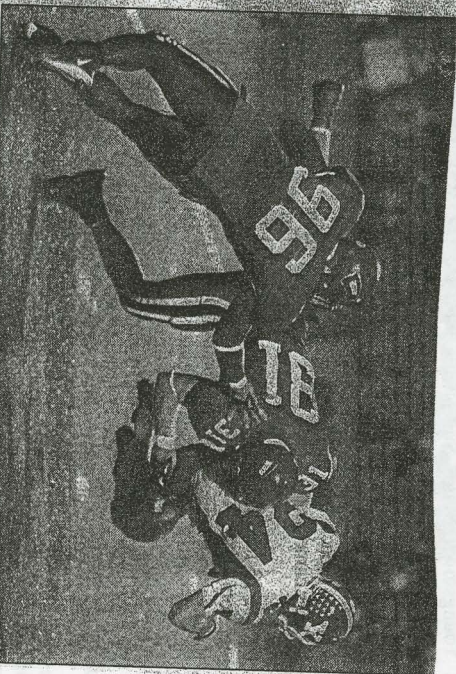
While he was out of the game, second- and third-string running backs Brian Porter and Stephen Willis both scored touchdowns. Porter ran in from 5 yards out and Willis caught a 27-yard touchdown pass from quarterback Justin Haddix.

Kicker comes through

Redshirt freshman Chris James was named the Toppers' starting kicker this past week after Tanner Stewert began to struggle.

The move paid off for Western, as James was perfect, hitting all three of his field-goal attempts and all four of his point-after attempts.

"There was definitely some butterflies when I went out there that



Trevor Frey/Daily News
WKU defensive end Getty Cavitt sacks Youngstown State quarterback Tom Zetts at L.T. Smith Stadium on Saturday.

first time," James said. "After that first kick, it all went away though." James was the Hilltoppers' starter following spring practice last year, but struggled in the summer.

"He's out of his slump or funk or whatever you want to call it," Elson said. "He's got some confidence now and he's kicking well."

Still no word on Holts

Elson would not say whether

Moore found himself in Elson's doghouse after fumbling the ball twice against the Penguins.

Moore lost a fumble early in the second quarter and when he fumbled again in the third, he was benched for the next two series—even though the Toppers didn't lose the ball.

"In this offense, they don't want anyone fumbling the ball," Moore said.

Elson added, "That's just not tolerated. It doesn't matter who you are, or how many yards you've

See NOTEBOOK, 3B

Cavitt Finally Finds A Home On The Hill

For a long time, it looked like baseball would be **Getty Cavitt's** ticket to success. After all, he was a starter on the varsity at Owensboro Senior High School as an eighth grader and he did earn two more letters in the sport than he did on the gridiron.

But, he also excelled in football after becoming a starter for the Red Devils as a sophomore. Cavitt—who now stands 6-foot-1 and weighs 240 pounds—was twice named the Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer Defensive Player of the Year and was a two-time all-state selection.

"I had a very good senior year in football," he said. "More coaches were calling me and talking to me about continuing to play."

Cavitt knew that playing both sports would be a difficult challenge, especially since the long baseball season was slowing his development on the football field.

"Playing both sports hurt more than it helped. I always played summer baseball—our American Legion team played 70 games a year," said Cavitt. "I would end up two weeks late to football camp because of baseball tournaments."

"I miss it (baseball), but I know it's real hard to play two sports in college. If I had it to do over again, I wish I would have at least tried out."

So Cavitt headed to the Hill in the fall of 2000. After sitting out his first year, a new journey began—one to find a home on the field.

Cavitt began his WKU career as a fullback, and he actually started his collegiate debut as the Hilltoppers defeated Kentucky State. In that game, he rushed for 61 yards and a touchdown on nine carries. He would finish the season with 102 yards, starting three of the four contests he appeared in.

The following fall, Cavitt reappeared on the other side of the ball playing inside linebacker. Stuck behind the likes of senior **Hayes Thomas**, future All-Americans **Erik Dandy** and **Karl Maslowski**, and one of the stars of this year's defense, **Charles Thompson**, Cavitt managed to make 17 stops in 14 games playing mostly on special teams.

"For a while, I didn't think I was going to play at all," he said. "I just kept showing up every day trying to get better, thinking that the time might come that I would get a break."

In 2002, he moved up and became a defensive lineman. And had the best year of his career in his first season as a starter.

In his first start on defense at right end, Cavitt recorded a career-high eight tackles—with two behind the line of scrimmage—and a blocked kick as the Toppers defeated Union (Ky.). He matched that tackle total in a 9-6 win over Southwest Missouri State as well as in the NCAA playoffs at Wofford, as he posted nine games with five or more stops.

According to Hilltopper defensive line coach **Mike Fanoga**, it's Cavitt's work ethic that helped him make the transition and have a successful 2003 campaign. "Getty plays and practices hard—he never slows down," he said. "He shows up to work and get better each and every day. Getty always gets after it."

With a career-best 61 total tackles, including nine for loss, Cavitt appeared to have settled into a position heading into his final campaign.

Until fall camp in August.

Cavitt continued to take snaps with the first-team defense on the line, but at the same time started working with outside linebackers as well. When WKU opened the season at Kansas State Sept. 4, lo and behold, Cavitt was playing his fourth position in as many years.

"The great thing about Getty is that he's always had the attitude, 'Put me wherever I have the best chance to play.' Any move that would put him closer to being on the field he took in stride and worked at it," head coach **David Elson** said. "For whatever reason it didn't work out at those other positions, but

his attitude has been great throughout. I know he had been anxious to find a home and to contribute, because he just wants to be in a position to make plays and help the team."

But again, the results have been positive. He recorded 13 tackles and the first interception of his career in the first two games before putting on his best-ever performance in the "Battle of the Bluegrass." Against rival Eastern Kentucky, Cavitt finished with a career-best 13 stops and an interception as the Hilltoppers defeated the Colonels for the third straight time, 21-8.

As WKU opens Gateway Football Conference play this evening against Youngstown State, he enters the game ranked second on the team in tackles, stops for loss and interceptions.

"The change this year has been great," said Cavitt. "Now I get to take on a tight end instead of facing a tackle. It's been a lot easier moving than I thought it would be."

"After serving as a reserve the first two years, it was exciting to finally get a chance to play. There were a lot of big shoes to fill with all the great players that have been in the program."

Outside linebackers coach **Mike Chism**, who is in his first season on the coaching staff, has been pleased with the way Cavitt has handled the most recent move.

"Getty has a lot of experience playing a lot of positions. He has a pretty good understanding of all the components that go into our defensive scheme," he said. "The adjustment wasn't real difficult for him since he knows what the defensive end is doing in front of him."

"We want to get our best 11 guys on the field, and moving him to outside linebacker allowed us to do that and give us a better defense."

While Cavitt is as happy as he's been at WKU, at least one person misses him.

"I miss the leadership he provided to the defensive line," said Fanoga. "But we have to put the best players on the field. He's doing a great job outside this year, making a lot of plays. I don't want to hold Getty back."

"We preach the team concept to the players, that's what we're trying to teach the younger guys."

Elson, who was the recruiting coordinator when Cavitt arrived on the Hill, was unsure of the impact that he would make. "I never had a real good feel for Getty coming out of high school. I remember watching him in the state championship game and thinking what a talent he was. He really stuck out to me playing fullback."

"Once he got here, Getty couldn't find the right position even though you saw flashes of his ability. He couldn't find a home, but we thought defensive line was a good fit for him."

"I've always known that he has had the talent and ability, it was just finding the right spot for him to play within our system."

Looking back at the journey, Cavitt was happy to be on the field as a freshman but doesn't have any regrets about switching sides of the ball.

"I don't miss playing fullback at all. I went in after that first season and talked to (former) coach (Jack) Harbaugh and he asked, 'What do you think we should do?' I told him I wanted to play defense, and he thought that was the best thing for me."

It might not be surprising that Cavitt took so long to find a home on the field considering he had a relatively late start in football. Growing up, he played soccer until he was 12 years old even though he was around football as a youngster.

"I always went to the high school's practices and stayed around the team a lot. I even served as a water boy. But I was always playing baseball because my dad played in college and was drafted."

Not only has he found a home on the field, Cavitt has also found one with his teammates as well. Quiet by nature in public and in interviews, he is one of the more popular Hilltoppers in the locker room.

"He's a pretty popular guy on the team, very social," Elson said. "He's more outgoing when he's around his teammates and his friends. Getty probably shies away from the spotlight, but when you go through our locker room and mention his name it will put a smile on the face of a lot of guys because he has a very humorous side to him."

"Getty is a lot more outgoing than what he seems to the public."

Chism agrees. "He's good for a one-liner. You ask him a question and Getty will come up with a comical answer."

Which probably shouldn't surprise anyone now that Cavitt has finally found a home on the Hill.

The Cavitt File



Full name: Gary Glenn Cavitt, Jr.
Born: Jan. 19, 1981, in Owensboro, Ky.
Hometown: Owensboro, Ky.
High School: Owensboro Senior
High School Letters: football, baseball

Ashley keeps progressing

By ROB HERBST
The Daily News

Western Kentucky offensive lineman Buster Ashley knew his time had come.

During his first three seasons with Western, Ashley played with offensive linemen who had more experience. Ashley, who was an All-American in 2002 and 2003, may have been the most talented lineman, but there were other older teammates who could lead.

But Western's offense has a veteran void this season. With the exception of Ashley, there's only one other returning senior on the starting offense. That automatically thrust Ashley into a leadership role.

"I've kind of been the quiet guy on the field and now I have to speak up a little more than I usually have," Ashley said. "And I became more serious instead of being a joker all the time. Nothing ever bothered me before and I was always a kidder, instead of taking things seriously at the right time and at the right moment."

Ashley already had some mediation skills. Ashley said when teammates confided any problems, he'd talk to coaches to help rectify the situation.

Yet once last season ended with a 34-17 loss to Wofford in the quarterfinals of the I-AA playoffs, coaches told Ashley they needed more.

"Right when last season was over, we told him he really had to step up in a leadership role," WKU coach David Elson said. "It was just natural. A lot of times the guys that are the best players get looked up to because they've performed. Buster had to develop into understanding that role."

And how has Ashley responded?

"He's responded to it as well as you could imagine," Elson said. "Our offensive staff has told me numerous times that Buster is a presence on the field in practice, when they come to the sidelines and in between series."

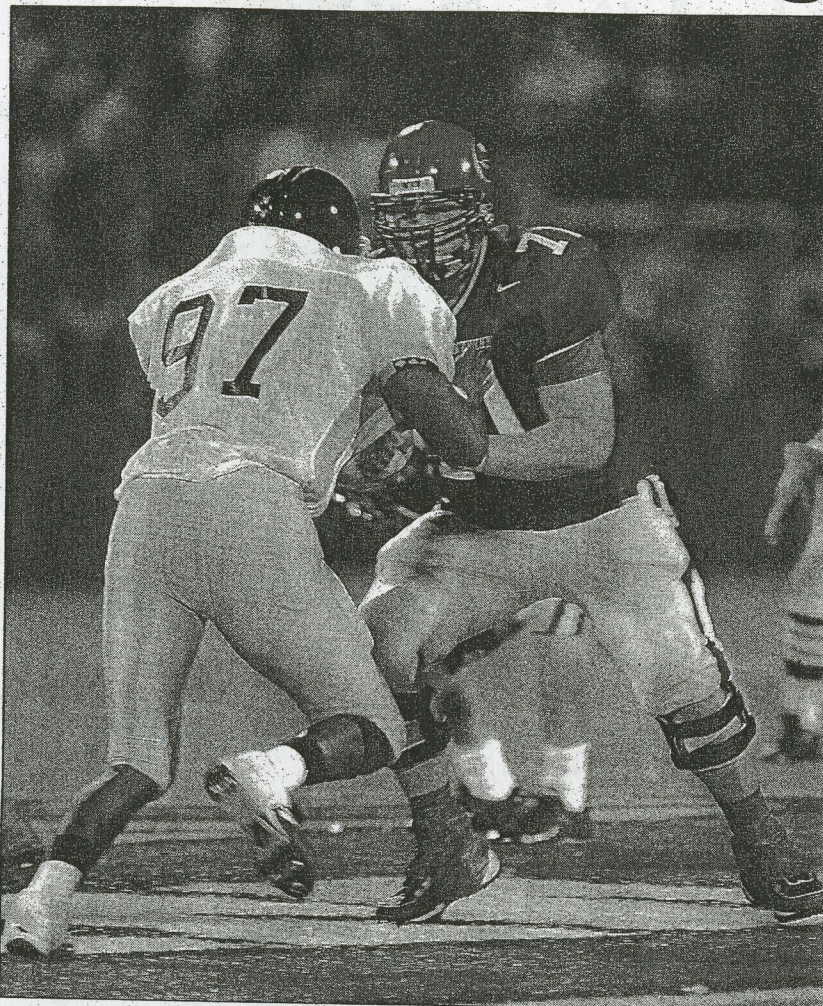
Ashley took steps in preparing for his new role. He and some other veterans spent a few days this summer taking classes on leadership taught by the ROTC.

"They talked about different leadership methods and different kinds of things that help people out," Ashley said. "It was real interesting going in there, seeing what they had to say about leadership and trying to take that to heart."

The Owensboro native took another maturing step this summer. Ashley got married to his longtime girlfriend Tiffany, a teacher at Rockfield Elementary, in June. The two had been dating since their high school days.

Fellow Owensboro High School and WKU linebacker Getty Cavitt was Ashley's best man and several coaches and teammates were in attendance for the ceremony.

Ashley said marriage hasn't changed



Clinton Lewis/Daily News

Western Kentucky offensive lineman Buster Ashley blocks Concord defensive lineman Terrance Lee during their matchup on Sept. 11 at L.T. Smith Stadium.

"The only thing that is different now that school and football are going on, we don't see each other that much," Ashley said. "You have to manage both."

Since the Ashleys had been dating for several years, the Hilltoppers don't see a difference with him.

"A lot of his teammates would say, 'Yeah, it's been like that way for a long time and now it's just official,'" Elson joked. "He has to take a little ribbing now and then about being the married man, but other than that, he's stayed the same."

Ashley could go through one more change after his final season at Western is complete. NFL scouts have routinely been at Western practices taking a look at Ashley and a few other Hilltoppers.

Ashley has been one of the most stable performers Western has ever had. With the exception of missing two starts in 2002 because of injury, Ashley has started in

every game since transferring from Louisville in time for the 2001 season. Ashley was also named the Gateway Conference's Offensive Lineman of the Week earlier this year.

Entering this season, The Sports Network tabbed Ashley as the best returning tackle in I-AA football this year.

"He's been Mr. Consistency over the last four years," Elson said. "It's been fun to watch as he's really matured both on and off the field. I definitely think he has a future (after Western). A lot depends on how he plays this year, but scouts see the ability and a lot have a lot of high praise for him."

Ashley notices the scouts who attend practice, but makes every attempt not to think about his long-term future.

"When you see them during practice, it makes you think a little bit," Ashley said. "But you have to focus on what you're doing. I don't think about what could happen."

Gatew

Team

Southern Illinois
SMS
Indiana State
Illinois State
Western Kentucky
Western Illinois
Youngstown State
Northern Iowa
Last week
Western Illinois
Indiana State 4
Tulsa 49, SMS
Southern Illinois
Youngstown State
Off-Western Kentucky
This week
Saturday, Oct.
Youngstown State
Illinois State at
Northern Iowa
Western Illinois

Tear

Total offense
1) Southern Illinois
2) Western Illinois
3) Illinois State
4) SMS
5) Western Kentucky

Rushing offense
1) Southern Illinois
2) Western Kentucky
3) Western Illinois
4) Youngstown State
5) SMS

Passing offense
1) Illinois State
2) Southern Illinois
3) Western Illinois
4) SMS
7) Western Kentucky

Total defense
1) Southern Illinois
2) Northern Iowa
3) Western Kentucky
4) Illinois State
5) Youngstown State

Rushing defense
1) Southern Illinois
2) Illinois State
3) Northern Iowa
4) SMS
5) Western Kentucky

Passing defense
1) Western Kentucky
2) Northern Iowa
3) Western Illinois
4) Southern Illinois
5) Youngstown State

Turnover margin
1) Western Kentucky
2) Indiana State
3) SMS
4) Southern Illinois

Rumph a quick learner for Tops

By ROB HERBST
The Daily News

Any Western Kentucky football player would need some heightened intelligence in order to start during his freshman season.

There's an entire playbook to master at a breakneck pace, all while trying to get acclimated to college life. There are also certain nuances of college football that need to be embedded into a player before he'll be capable on game day.

But WKU coach David Elson knew freshman free safety Marion Rumph had the intellect to join the Hilltoppers' defense.

"He's so football-smart and savvy," Elson said. "He's doing things typical freshmen don't do."

Rumph has started in Western's first three contests and won the position during a training camp battle in August. Rumph already has two interceptions and is seventh on the Hilltoppers in tackling.

And he's not a typical freshman.

Rumph is only 17 and won't turn 18 until Nov. 21, when Western's regular season is complete. According to WKU history books, he's the first player under the age of 18 to make a significant contribution since 1984, when Rob Weinle played as an offensive lineman.

During one year of grade school, Rumph completed both second and third grades, eventually allowing him to be a true youngster on Western's defense.

"When I moved up a grade, they told me this would happen," Rumph said. "They said I'd always be the young guy, so I've been preparing for this."

"But things have gone well so far. I've fit in and guys treat me like I'm a football player."

Not only did Rumph have the brains to speed through two grades, but he also finished with a 4.0 grade-point average at Manatee High School in Bradenton, Fla., and never missed a day of school since entering grade school.

Elson became aware of this when he made a recruiting trip to Rumph's home.

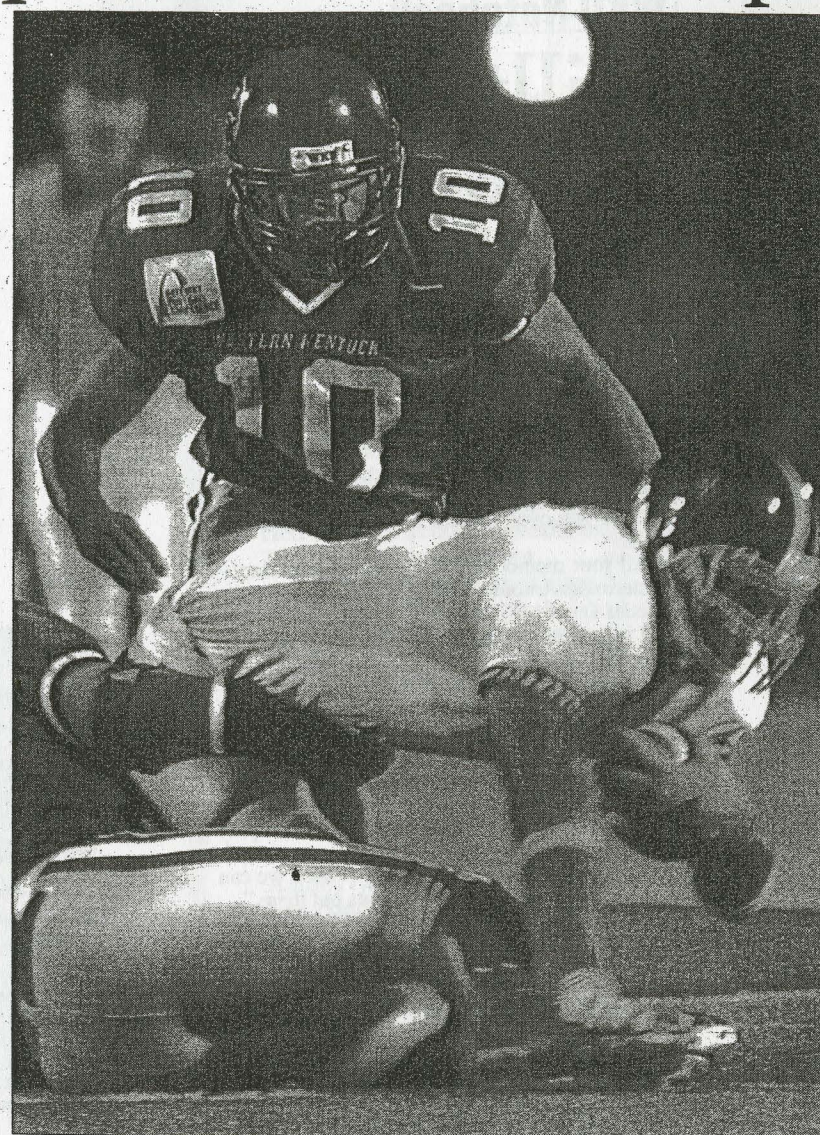
"I kept that in my mind and that made me think he'd be a special kid," Elson said. "It says a lot about his character and upbringing, and when I heard that he had never missed a day, it makes you want him even more because that carries onto the field and into everything in his life."

That doesn't mean Rumph didn't have any close calls.

"There were days when I was sick and I went half a day just so it counted that I was at school," Rumph joked. "There were days when I was at the doctor but came back. But my mom (Shirley) said if she could go to work, I could go to school."

"She never missed work and I never missed school."

Because Rumph's family lives in Florida, they haven't seen him play a college football game yet. That will change this weekend when the Hilltoppers travel to Miami and face Florida International, about 2½ hours away from Rumph's home-



Clinton Lewis/Daily News

Western Kentucky's Marion Rumph (10) watches a teammate make a tackle during the Hilltoppers' home opener against Concord.

town. Rumph hasn't put any added interest on playing FIU, even though he is returning close to his roots.

"I know (my parents) are excited, but I think they just want me to approach it like any other game," Rumph said. "They don't want me to focus on them and I'm going to approach it like any other game—I want the win. It doesn't matter if I have people in the stands or not."

Rumph's trek to becoming an immediate starter began when he arrived at Western in July.

In order to do so, Rumph passed a crash course on Western's defensive playbook. He also won the acclaim of his more experienced teammates.

"He's like my little brother out there, so I'm proud of the way he's stepped up and have been real impressed," WKU junior strong safety Dennis Mitchell said. "If you're a freshman, it could take you a

whole year to learn."

Rumph helped anchor a secondary that had six of Western's seven interceptions against rival Eastern Kentucky last weekend. The seven interceptions tied a WKU school record and Rumph had a pair of the interceptions.

Western has had a recent history of success in the secondary. Former WKU safety Dennis Mitchell, plus cornerbacks Bobby Sippio and Joseph Jefferson, are all with NFL teams; and defensive backs Jeremy Chandler and Antonio Veals have been All-Gateway Conference selections over the past two years.

But Elson thinks Rumph can turn into one of Western's most elite defensive backs.

"The sky is the limit for him," Elson said. "It is going to be fun to watch him develop because with the sense and maturity he has at such a young age, he could be one of the best we've seen around here."

Team
SMS
Southern Illinois St
Western Kentucky
Indiana State
Western Illinois
Youngstown State
Northern Illinois
Last week
Western Kentucky
Hampton
Indiana State
Stephen F. Austin
Southern Illinois
SMS 45, Illinois State
McNeese
This week
Saturday
Western Kentucky
Southern Illinois
Tennessee
Illinois State
Liberty at
Southwestern
Quincy at

Total offense
1) Southern Illinois
2) SMS
3) Illinois State
4) Western Kentucky
5) Western Illinois

Rushing
1) Southern Illinois
2) Western Kentucky
3) Western Illinois
4) Youngstown State
5) SMS

Passing offense
1) Illinois State
2) SMS
3) Southern Illinois
4) Indiana State
7) Western Kentucky

Total defense
1) Southern Illinois
2) Northern Iowa
3) Western Kentucky
4) SMS
5) Illinois State

Rushing defense
1) SMS
2) Southern Illinois
3) Illinois State
4) Northern Illinois
5) Western Kentucky

Passing defense
1) Western Kentucky
2) Western Illinois
3) Northern Illinois
4) Southern Illinois
5) Youngstown State

Turnover margin
1) Western Kentucky
2) SMS
3) Indiana State
3) Western Illinois
5) three teams



Sports on the Hill

Schedule of Western Kentucky University athletics

Friday, Oct. 1
MEN'S SOCCER

Noon — Western Kentucky at
Florida International

VOLLEYBALL
6 p.m. — Western Kentucky at

5 p.m. — Western Kentucky at
Drake



Sports on the Hill

Schedule of Western Kentucky University athletics

WKU Notebook 9/19/04

Hilltopper secondary sets record

By ROB HERBST
The Daily News

rherbst@bgdailynews.com/783-3238

RICHMOND — Western Kentucky's secondary may have been the question mark of its defense, but the entire unit contributed largely in its 21-8 win over Eastern Kentucky on Saturday night.

All four members of the starting secondary — cornerbacks Antonio Thomas and Artis Neal, plus safeties Dennis Mitchell and Marion Rumph — all had interceptions against EKV quarterback Josh Greco.

Thomas and Rumph each had two and linebacker Getty Cavitt added one as well. Western's secondary helped Greco earn a dubious spot in the record books.

His seven interceptions tied him for most interceptions by a quarterback in a I-AA game.

"They say we're young, but we don't play young," Mitchell said. "We've got a great bunch of athletes back there. Tonight we proved we can play with any receivers a team puts out there."

Before Saturday's game, WKU linebacker Charles Thompson admitted his secondary hadn't been tested by a passing offense. After Saturday's game, Thompson was giving out high grades.

"I think they passed with an A-plus," he said. "I just loved seeing that tonight."

He and fellow linebacker Getty Cavitt would have also earned A's — Thompson finished with a career-high 18 tackles and Cavitt had 13 tackles and an interception.

"Like I said this week, this game was personal to me as well as a couple other guys on the team," Thompson said. "We did what we had to do."

Moore returns

WKU running back Lerron Moore returned from a hamstring injury that forced him to sit out last weekend's game against Concord.

He once again became the Hilltoppers' workhorse, rushing 26 times for 113 yards and a career-high three touchdowns.

All three scores came in the second half.

"It took me a couple plays, or a couple hits to get a feel for things," Moore said. "But it felt good to be out there again."

Moore did play in Western's season opener at I-A Kansas State when he aggravated his hamstring injury. But after Saturday's performance, Moore proclaimed himself 100 percent.

"When I look back on it, (sitting out last week) was probably the right thing to do," Moore said.

Late injury

Western Kentucky linebacker Brandon Smith was only one minute away from truly enjoying the Hilltoppers' victory over Eastern. But any postgame celebration was somewhat subdued because of an apparent knee injury, which came on the third-to-last play while trying to rush Greco. He hobbled off the field and was noticeably limping during postgame festivities. There was no clear indication on the extent of Smith's injury.

"I think it's all right," he said.

Crowd control

Much like last year's game at L.T. Smith Stadium, the Battle of the Bluegrass brought out a slew of fans. A crowd of 22,700 was announced Saturday, making it the fifth largest crowd in Roy Kidd Stadium history.

It was the biggest crowd at EKV since 1979. Western had a capacity crowd of 18,317 last year.

WKU Ashley likes teaching

Continued from C1

comed her half-sister's children. As his parents at times worked numerous jobs to support the family, Buster Ashley made himself available to watch over his cousins as often as possible.

"He has a very big heart," Karen Ashley said of her 6-foot-4, 300-pound son.

Buster Ashley considered becoming a physical education teacher before quickly becoming bored. He also thought of the impact he could have if he worked with disadvantaged children.

As part of Western's program, he spent the spring semester student-teaching.

He worked mostly with children with learning disabilities. He sees himself as a future elementary school teacher.

It's "a little less intimidating," he said.

Ashley said younger children seem to respect their teachers more. That sounds funny coming from an All-America tackle who helped Western rush for 375 yards in last week's 58-0 home victory over Division II Concord (WVa.).

Western coach David Elson called Ashley the best offensive lineman he has seen during the eight years he has been with the program. He went as far as to say that Ashley might be the greatest in WKU history.

Ashley graded out at 95 percent last year and led the team with 168 "pancake" blocks. He became the fourth Western player to collect consensus All-America honors in the past four years.

Elson said Ashley's football ability isn't all that's impressive.

"He's a great, great person," he said. "He's a big kid. He enjoys being around kids. He likes kidding around. He has a great personality and has grown into being a leader."

Ashley's college career began at the University of Louisville. He was redshirted his first season after being recruited by coach John L. Smith out of Owensboro High School.

But he left after the first year because of what he described as homesickness for small town life. He transferred to Western, where a former high school teammate, linebacker Getty Cavitt, was playing.

Since his arrival, Ashley has started at left tackle all four seasons. This past summer he married his high school sweetheart, Tiffany, who is a teacher.

"I don't regret anything," Ashley said. "I didn't feel right (at U of L). I thought if I had stayed, I would have regretted it. It was time to move on. The program was great, I think it was more the town. I wasn't used to a big city. The big city kind of got to me."

Eastern coach Danny Hope was a U of L assistant when Ashley was there. Hope, who had coached offensive linemen for 20 years, has high praise for Ashley.

"He's an outstanding player," he said. "I think he's an NFL caliber lineman. They would love to have him at Louisville. I know that."

Ashley said that his focus always has been more on his teaching career than a possible NFL career.

"I hope to go to the NFL and be able to take care of my family," he said. "But you also have to look at the fact that not everybody makes it. That's why you go to school and get your degree. That's my mentality. Football is here, but you also have to get your education."

Eastern officials are anticipating a sellout crowd at Kidd Stadium for tomorrow's game. Somewhere in the stands will be the Ashley family, including Nicki and Cody.

They always are in his thoughts and have shaped his future. He gladly will play pro football if the opportunity is there. With or without football, though, he intends to teach.

"I always knew what I wanted to do," Ashley said.

Hilltoppers' Ashley drawn to career in special education

All-American lineman helped raise cousins

By Michael Grant
mgrant@courier-journal.com
The Courier-Journal

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — Western Kentucky University's best offensive lineman, and arguably the best in school history, wants to be a special-education teacher — even if it may mean waiting until after a pro football career.

Buster Ashley, whose Hilltoppers will play at Eastern Kentucky at 7:30 p.m. EDT tomorrow, is passionate about aiding those with special needs. He has been that way since cousins Niki, 12, and Cody, 11, entered his life as babies.

Niki has suffered from fetal-alcohol syndrome, an eating disorder, a heart condition and other problems. Cody is suffering from severe attention-deficit disorder, mild mental retardation and severe anxiety, among other difficulties.

Ashley always wanted to be a teacher. Helping raise his cousins focused his emphasis.

"When I leave school I'll be able to help somebody," the 23-year-old Owensboro native said. "I have teachers that I still talk to that helped me. I watched them (my cousins) grow up and saw all the troubles.

"It was hard, having to drive to Louisville almost every weekend for them to go to the doctor and go through their surgeries. It's been hard seeing the problems they've had in school because of their disabilities. It's hard when it's a family member."

Niki and Cody were adopted by the Ashley family after their mother was institutionalized. Karen Ashley wel-

See WKU, C7, col. 1

WESTERN KENTUCKY AT EASTERN KENTUCKY

When: 7:30 p.m. EDT tomorrow

Where: Richmond, Ky.

Radio: WAVG-1450



By Jim Roshan, Special to The Courier-Journal

"When I leave school I'll be able to help somebody," said WKU offensive lineman Buster Ashley, right, who helped raise two cousins with special needs.

The speediest Topper of all

By ROB HERBST
The Daily News

When Western Kentucky's Dennis Mitchell became a favorite of his elementary school teachers, he realized he had a gift.

"We had a field day in school and all the teachers asked me if I could be on their relay team," Mitchell said. "I kind of figured out then I was fast."

Mitchell isn't just fast.

He's quicker than a magician's hands. And Mitchell can make the legitimate claim he's the fastest football player in Division I.

The junior strong safety from Indianapolis also runs for the WKU track team and ran a 10.19 in the 100-meter dash in the NCAA regionals. Mitchell's time was ninth overall in the regional and while there are a slew of football players in Division I who run track, nobody had a better time than Mitchell.

"We've had some fast ones here like (current NFL players) Rod Smart and Mel Mitchell," WKU coach David Elson said. "But 10.19 ... you don't hear about that very often!"

Dennis Mitchell is one of a long line of WKU football players to participate in track and field. Along with Smart and Mitchell, former Hilltoppers Joseph Jefferson and Sherrod Coates participated in track and field. Jefferson is currently with the NFL's Indianapolis Colts while Coates spent last season with the Cleveland Browns.

Track season does conflict at times with spring football, but Elson sees the benefits of having some of his players compete in both sports.

"It tells you something about an athlete when he plays different sports and wants to do different sports," Elson said. "It tells you he's a competitor and we like that aspect of it."

"And it can help certain guys' speed. Nobody knows how to train better for speed than (WKU track and field coach) Curtiss Long. As long as it isn't a distraction, we're all for it."

Mitchell's speed has made him one of the mainstays on the WKU defense, despite having started only six games, dating back to last year.

In only four starts last year, Mitchell picked off three passes, recorded three sacks and forced two fumbles.

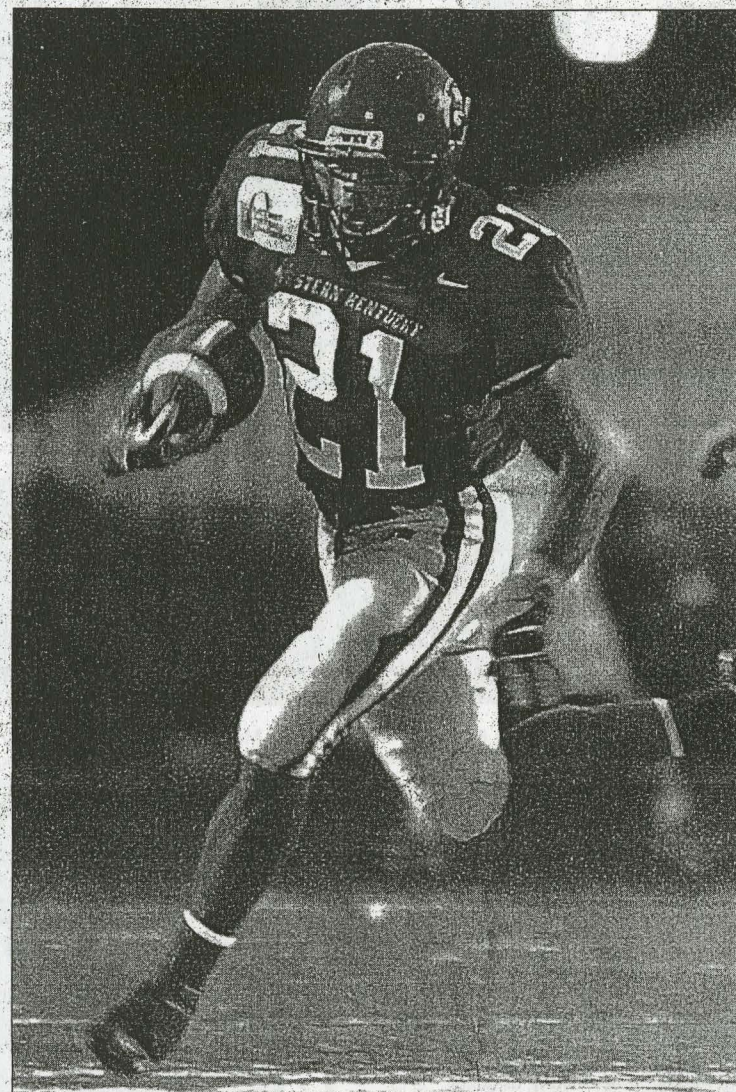
Outside of linebackers, Mitchell is the Hilltoppers' leading tackler this year. Mitchell's speed has made him an eraser for WKU — if he makes a mistake on the field, he can correct it because of his speed.

"My speed overcomes a lot," Mitchell said. "Sometimes I'll make a mistake and have to catch up to a receiver. Or I'll make a bad read and catch up."

But Elson said Mitchell doesn't make mistakes often.

"He's one of those that you say 'oh no, oh no (during a play),' then say 'it's OK, it's OK' because he can make up with that burst of speed and explosiveness. But he really does play with good technique so he doesn't have to do that very often."

Because of his speed, Mitchell has become a mainstay on Western's special teams, returning kickoffs and punts. He



Clinton Lewis/Daily News

Western Kentucky's Dennis Mitchell returns a punt during Saturday's home opener against Concord.

hasn't returned a kick for a touchdown yet, but set a lofty goal for the season.

"My goal was to break Virgil Livers' punt return records," Mitchell said. "But I haven't felt close in returning one yet."

Livers played for the Chicago Bears from 1975-81 and holds WKU's record for punt return yards in a game (145) and a season (545). Livers also holds Western's record for touchdown punt returns in a season with three in 1974.

Mitchell may be the fastest Hilltopper, but his athletic ability doesn't equate to added confidence. Mitchell earned his first career start in the Hilltoppers' regular-season home finale against Northern Iowa.

When Mitchell took the field on that November Saturday last season, he needed support from then-senior cornerback Jeremy Chandler, who Mitchell knew because they competed against each other in high school track in Indianapolis.

"I was out there scared," Mitchell admitted. "Jeremy told me to take 10 deep

breaths and just play. I didn't know what I was getting into. I wanted to play real bad, but I just didn't want to make any mistakes. I didn't want guys to say, 'Don't play him anymore.'"

Western coaches had plenty of confidence in Mitchell. Not only did they insert him into the starting lineup, but they did so in a crucial game. Had WKU not beaten sixth-ranked Northern Iowa, the Hilltoppers could forget about making a trip to the I-AA playoffs.

But WKU beat Northern Iowa 24-3, then beat Youngstown State 37-13 in the final game of the regular season to earn a post-season bid. After Mitchell's second start, he was the Gateway Conference's Defensive Player of the Week after he recorded nine tackles and an interception against Youngstown State.

"He's just got a sense of where the football is," Elson said. "He's got those things you just can't coach. The track speed and explosiveness really carry onto the field."

Gateway Conf

Team	Conference	
	W	L
SMS	0	0
Western Illinois	0	0
Western Kentucky	0	0
Illinois State	0	0
Southern Illinois	0	0
Youngstown State	0	0
Northern Iowa	0	0
Indiana State	0	0

Last week

Western Kentucky 58, Concord (V) 21
Minnesota 37, Illinois State 21
Indiana State 33, Eastern Illinois 33
Northern Iowa 40, Minnesota State 33
Northern Illinois 23, Southern Illinois 33
SMS 33, Sam Houston State 30
Western Illinois 98, Cheyney 7
Florida International 22, Youngstown State 6

This week

Saturday, Sept. 18

Western Kentucky at Eastern Kentucky
Western Illinois at Hampton, 12:30
Murray State at Indiana State, 1 p.
Stephen F. Austin at Northern Iowa
William Penn at Southern Illinois
Union (Ky.) College at SMS, 6 p.
Eastern Illinois at Illinois State, 6:
Youngstown State at McNeese State

Statisti

Team leaders

Total offense	
1) Southern Illinois	467.0 yf
2) Illinois State	466.0 yf
3) SMS	455.0 yf
4) Western Illinois	454.0 yf
5) Western Kentucky	379.5 yf

Rushing offense	
1) Western Illinois	257.0 yf
2) Southern Illinois	246.0 yf
3) Western Kentucky	226.0 yf
4) Northern Iowa	182.0 yf
5) SMS	166.5 yf

Passing offense	
1) Illinois State	303.5 yf
2) SMS	288.5 yf
3) Indiana State	233.5 yf
4) Southern Illinois	221.0 yf
7) Western Kentucky	153.5 yf

Total defense	
1) Northern Iowa	251.0 yf
2) Southern Illinois	325.0 yf
2) Illinois State	325.0 yf
4) Western Kentucky	342.0 yf
5) SMS	380.5 yf

Rushing defense	
1) SMS	99.0 yf
2) Northern Iowa	115.5 yf
3) Illinois State	124.0 yf
4) Southern Illinois	129.0 yf
7) Western Kentucky	173.5 yf

Passing defense	
1) Northern Iowa	135.5 yf
2) Western Illinois	154.0 yf
3) Western Kentucky	168.5 yf
4) Southern Illinois	196.0 yf
5) Illinois State	201.0 yf

Turnover margin	
1) Western Kentucky	+
2) Western Illinois	+
3) SMS	+
3) Youngstown State	+
5) Southern Illinois	+

Third-down conversions	
1) SMS	48.6%
2) Northern Iowa	45.7%
3) Western Kentucky	44.4%
4) Western Illinois	43.3%

Perkins comes out of nowhere

By **ROB HERBST**
The Daily News

Western Kentucky wide receiver Maurice Perkins had been like a struggling actor desperately trying to get noticed, yet relegated to waiting tables in order to make a living.

But in his on-screen debut last Saturday, Perkins was a star.

The Indianapolis junior earned his first career start and racked up a game-high 126 yards on five catches against I-A Kansas State. Perkins' yardage was the highest among all Gateway Conference wide-outs last weekend and was the second-highest yardage total for a WKU receiver since 1998.

"It was the game I've been waiting for my whole life," Perkins said. "I wanted to play in front of 50,000 people and show what I could do."

Before Perkins could show thousands of fans what he could do, he needed to gain the attention of WKU coaches. After transferring from NCAA Division II St. Joseph's, Perkins redshirted in 2002 and was at the bottom of Western's depth chart last year.

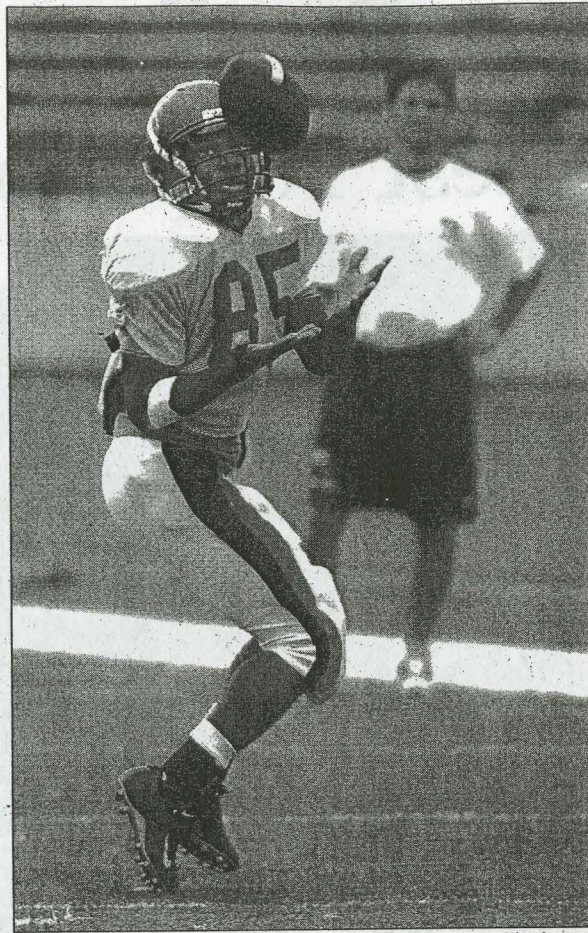
Perkins spent his time as a scout-team player, obliged to simulate Western's opponent during a week of practice in order to prepare first- and second-teamers for their weekly contest.

Being a scout-team player is when Perkins earned his first notice.

"I just remembered this catch he made and it was one of the most athletic catches I've ever seen," WKU coach David Elson said. "He went up so high for it, his body was twisted and turned. It was incredible and that was the one that made me say 'Wow, look at this guy.'"

The acrobatic catch didn't get Perkins much playing time, since he only played in two games and didn't make a catch last year. But Perkins received his first break after being a relative unknown.

Perkins left St. Joseph's after starting in his freshman season in 2001. There were no promis-



Joe Imel/Daily News

Western Kentucky wide receiver Maurice Perkins prepares to receive a pass Tuesday as coach David Elson watches during practice.

es Perkins would play at Western, but he was given the opportunity to walk on when he arrived for school.

"I had a few friends down here and I just didn't like St. Joseph's because it was too small," Perkins said. "I don't think coach Elson knew me. I think he had heard of me, but in order to get noticed, you've got to make plays and do something dramatic."

Elson didn't have much knowledge of Perkins, although they shared one common bond. Both are alumni of Cathedral High School in Indianapolis.

"We didn't really know much about him and didn't

really recruit him," Elson said. "He just kind of showed up down here."

Along with getting acclimated to a new system at a new school, Perkins had to adjust to a position change.

Perkins was a starting cornerback at St. Joseph's, but learned quickly cornerback wouldn't be the right place for him at a school like Western.

"When I lined up for my first game at cornerback, the receiver was 6-foot-6, 230 pounds," said the 5-9, 170-pound Perkins. "I went to jam him and he gave me a forearm to the middle of the face. It knocked me off balance, so I knew when I came down here and played

with the real big boys, I'd move to receiver and let those guys try and stop me."

Perkins' size doesn't make him a large target for WKU sophomore quarterback Justin Haddix, but Elson has been impressed with Perkins' other traits.

"He's deceptively fast and smooth," Elson said. "Sometimes it doesn't look like he's going all that hard, but he's very smooth and a good route runner."

Although Perkins didn't see much game action last season, Perkins knew this year would be his opportunity for playing time.

Western's top two wide receivers from last year, Casey Rooney and Shannon Hayes, are gone after racking up more than 1,500 receiving yards.

An open competition for starting receiver positions ensued during preseason camp and Perkins was in the mix, although others had more experience.

"Every receiver was so worn out after every single practice," Perkins said. "We were fighting for those spots so hard and I was hungry for it. I saw everybody hungry last year when I was standing on the sideline and I wasn't going to hold back anything. You still have to have that hunger because other receivers want to play."

Perkins got a slow start because of a shoulder injury, which lingered last Saturday. But Perkins eventually won one of the starting positions against Kansas State and will once again start in the Hilltoppers' season opener against Division II Concord (W.Va.) at 7 p.m. on Saturday after having what most receivers would consider a career game in his debut.

"I don't think (offensive coordinator) T.J. Weist or any of us were surprised," Elson said. "But when you've only played in two games then catch five (passes) for 126 (yards), I would definitely think that would classify as a surprise. He's shown flashes and sparks here and there, but he put it all together on Saturday."

Gatew

Team
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Indiana State
Northern Iowa
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SMS 31, Drake
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Concord (W.V.
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Minnesota Stat
Southern Illinc
Sam Houston S
Cheyney at We
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Team
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3) Illinois Stat
4) Youngstown
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Rushing offen
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Total defense
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Ashley Makes A Difference On The Field And In The Classroom

When the children are around the teacher, they can't help but be awed. And somewhat intimidated too. It isn't everyday that they are in the presence of a 6-foot-4, 300-pound instructor.

But once they spend any amount of time around **Buster Ashley**, they come to love the Western Kentucky University All-American.

"I've been able to work with youngsters through kids in high school, and the little ones are more intimidated than anyone by the size and the height," Ashley said. "They stay pretty quiet until they get to know you — when they figure out you're not a big, mean guy like they believe, they open up."

"Obviously, kids look up to Buster. They like to be around him," Hilltopper head coach **David Elson** said. "He is a very positive influence on them. Buster works in the after-school program in the summer where my daughter goes, so I've been able to see him in action."

"Some people just have a calling, and I think that's his — he enjoys being around those young kids and being a positive factor in their life."

Ashley's position coach, **Walter Wells**, has a thought on why the senior is interested in the teaching profession. "He's just a big kid at heart. Buster jokes and has fun with them."

That's not to say that Wells believes that it provides Ashley time to play.

"Buster cares about those kids' futures," he added. "He wants them to be happy. Working with special needs children is true to his heart."

"I feel like I can make a big impact on them because of my motivation to teach," Ashley added. "And I love being around kids. Every job I've ever had growing up has been with young children."

If the kids haven't been able to get enough of Ashley yet — he has performed a semester as a teaching assistant on Tuesdays and Thursdays only — they can expect to see a whole lot more of him in the spring. Following his senior season, Ashley will be a full-time teaching assistant in the spring.

Ashley hopes to be able to continue working with a younger age group when he gets into teaching full-time. "So many kids don't even have fathers now, so I feel like I can help out some by being a father figure in their life. And I don't teach the middle school age group too — I feel that I relate to them and the way they act."

For Ashley, an exceptional child education major, the goal of working with children goes back to his home. Not only did he grow up with both an older and a younger brother, but his parents adopted cousins **Niki** and **Cody Young** in their infancy about 13 years ago.

"When we took them into our home, I saw the passion that my mom and dad had for family," he said. "But I think they really influenced me as they grew up — to see what they had to go through medically and everything they had to deal with. I saw that I wanted to help, and they made me realize how to treat people since some individuals have no control of their circumstances."

Getting to know Ashley is to realize that family is important to him. Not only does he appreciate his childhood in Owensboro, but the fifth-year student has already started his own family — Ashley married his high school sweetheart, **Tiffany**, last summer. He is one of two Hilltoppers on the 95-player roster who is married.

"We've been together since the summer prior to my junior year of high school. She's been with me every step of the way since graduating, and she's been through all the hard times that I've had," he said. "We had been dating for six years, so I felt it was time to get married. Everybody knew it was going to happen, I just made it official by saying 'I do.'"

"By doing it before my senior year, it made me feel complete starting a family. Whenever anything happens down the road, I know she's going to be there."

Surely Ashley has been changed by his marriage. Not so, said Wells.

"I don't think there's much of a difference," he laughed. "He's got more responsibilities at home, so I'm sure he can't go out as much as he used to. But he's been married as long as he's been here, really." Ashley agrees that he hasn't changed over the summer. "It's really not any different. It's not like I have any more money in my wallet," he said. "But, it's been great and I love it — I wouldn't change anything for the world."

"I don't think he's changed too much," added Elson. "He's the same Buster that we've all grown to know and love. Guys razz him about the married life here and there, but I don't think it's changed him."

The road the Ashleys took included a stop between Owensboro and Bowling Green. Although he was primarily a first baseman on the diamond growing up, he began playing football in the eighth grade and was a highly sought after recruit following a career at Owensboro Senior High that saw him pick up first-team all-state accolades — Ashley turned down the likes of Arkansas, North Carolina and Virginia Tech to attend Louisville.

Again, the decision revolved around family.

"I'm a big family guy, I like being around my parents and friends," said Ashley. "I think when I picked Louisville, I was caught up in the moment with a big school — one that was close to home."

Although he was selected the scout team's most valuable player during his season as a redshirt at U of L, he was interested in a change of scenery. Enter Western.

"I had been here (Bowling Green) a couple of times with friends in high school and enjoyed it," he said. "I just called (former) coach (Jack) Harbaugh on the phone one day and asked, 'Can I come?'"

All parties are happy four years later. Ashley made an immediate impact on the Hill, earning second-team all-Gateway Conference honors while being named to the league's All-Newcomer Team. One season later, he was voted first-team all-Gateway after helping the Toppers to a share of the regular-season title on their way to the 2002 national championship. And last fall, he became the fourth WKU player in as many years to earn consensus All-America honors.

"One thing that has helped Buster earn more recognition is using more passing in our offense," said Wells. "It has made him more of a complete player. He's also gotten bigger and stronger, and he's doing a better job of finishing up his blocks. And really, his biggest improvement from 2002 to now is his understanding of the game — now he can just go out and play, and physically dominate people."

"When I transferred, I really didn't expect to get all of the recognition that has come. I just look at it that things fall into place for a reason," Ashley said. "On the offensive line, we don't worry about statistics or honors, we are just out there to win and protect our backfield."

Ashley has been as durable as he has been reliable protecting the quarterback's blind side at left tackle. He has only missed one contest in his career — "I was more upset that the injury came on a field goal instead of an actual play," he recalled — and rebounded from that injury to play in all but two series in the national championship contest.

It is that combination of work ethic and humility that has earned the respect of his peers and coaches. Ashley was rewarded in preseason camp last month when he was voted one of Western's three team captains for the 2004 campaign.

"It's a big honor to be voted captain. I was thrilled when the players did that," he said. "I think that the key is that I lead on the field and in the locker room the way I have the last three years. Other guys know they can come to me, and that I will communicate with the coaching staff."

Elson added, "You automatically think of Buster as a leader because of what a good, productive player he has been. But it is something that he has done an incredible job of adjusting to — he knows that he has to step up and at times be more vocal. Buster — more so than any guy that I've seen — has grown into a leadership role that maybe wasn't natural to him because he's not that outgoing of a individual when it comes to that situation."

And while his goal is to teach following the completion of his career, that dream may have to wait. Many believe that Ashley could be playing on Sundays a year from now.

"Buster is the best offensive lineman I've ever coached. He is talented, he has great physical athletic ability and he's smart," said Wells. "He is not a 'rep' guy — he doesn't have to run drills over and over again to learn them. He figures it out real quick, then goes and plays."

"There's no question in my mind that Buster will play at the next level for a long time."

Many may see the decision as being easy to make, but Ashley doesn't agree. "It's hard to balance, because every time I go to class people are asking about the NFL," he said. "But, I want to get my degree while I'm here because if it doesn't work out I don't have to worry about coming back to school."

"If I can go to the next level, I'm going to take it. It never really crossed my mind growing up — it never really came up until last year."

The kids Ashley has become popular with can count on one thing. No matter where football takes him over the next few years, he will be back in the classroom — and not looking for a degree.

The Ashley File

Full name: Clyde Ashley
Born: Aug. 25, 1981, in Christian County, Ky.
Hometown: Owensboro, Ky.
High School: Owensboro Senior
High School Letters: football, baseball





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Western's Ashley takes a back seat to no one

Jim Pickens

09/04/04

Messenger-Inquirer

Western Kentucky University plays its "payday game" tonight when it steps up in class to challenge NCAA Division I Kansas State University at Manhattan, Kan.

The I-AA Hilltoppers aren't expected to win, or even make it a competitive contest, but they will be well-paid for their role as the Wildcats' fodder. Make no mistake, financial compensation is the reason WKU schedules one game like this per year.

As good as Western is -- a Top 15 team in I-AA -- the Hilltoppers will be outmanned by K-State at virtually every position, save one -- at left offensive tackle, WKU's Buster Ashley can hold his own with most any lineman in America.

Ashley is a former Owensboro High School star who came to Western as a transfer from the University of Louisville, where he was highly touted but never comfortable. As a Hilltopper, Ashley has flourished.

He earned various All-American plaudits as a sophomore in 2002, helping lead Western to a 34-14 upset of McNeese State in the I-AA national championship game at Chattanooga, Tenn.

Last year, Ashley was a first-team consensus All-American as the Toppers won nine games and reached the quarterfinals of the I-AA playoffs.



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Now, he is a well-respected veteran, a senior co-captain in his final collegiate season. Western is predicted to do well again this season in the tough Gateway Conference. Ashley is likely to do even better.

A unanimous preseason All-American, Ashley is expected to pancake the opposition into submission throughout the year and become a high-round NFL draft selection in 2005. There is little reason to believe that he won't deliver on both counts.

At 6-foot-4 and 300 pounds, Ashley has the frame, girth and strength to compete at the highest level.

Ashley is a big man who can run, and his innate athleticism has always made him a unique talent; a step ahead of the pack. Besides that, his blocking technique is considered superb.

Then, there is the combination of his natural toughness, poise under pressure and understated competitive fire. Few possess the will to compete and win as does Ashley. He brings it every play, every day. There is an efficient relentlessness about this guy's MO that simply can't be ignored.

In short, Ashley is one of the guys the NFL gurus are referring to when they intone the well-worn phrase "total package."

We'll soon be watching Ashley play for pay on Sundays, along with a growing number of former Toppers in the NFL -- Mel Mitchell (Saints), Joseph Jefferson (Colts), Jeremi Johnson (Bengals), Sherrod Coates (Browns), Bobby Sippio (Dolphins) and Rod "He Hate Me" Smart (Panthers).

He begins his final collegiate season for WKU tonight. Even against a superior opponent such as Kansas State, Buster Ashley will take a back seat to no one.

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webmaster@messenger-inquirer.com

8/29/04

WESTERN KENTUCKY

Hilltoppers in good hands with Haddix

QB a grizzled sophomore now

By Michael Grant
mgrant@courier-journal.com
The Courier-Journal

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — One of the first moves David Elson made last year as a rookie head coach at Western Kentucky University was to install a true freshman at quarterback.

Initially some veterans of the 2002 NCAA Division I-AA championship team were skeptical, but Justin Haddix erased those doubts in a hurry.

The Gateway Conference's Freshman of the Year piloted the Hilltoppers to a 9-4 mark and a playoff victory. Now his teammates and coaches are effusive in their praise of the Breathitt County High School graduate.

They agree that Haddix is more than a mere facilitator of the option-based attack. They say he's a leader.

"I was really surprised," junior tailback Lerron Moore said. "No one expected him to come in and be the starter. After the first scrimmage he showed that he can play, that he's a ball-player. He has really proved himself. Now he has a target on his chest. He's our star quarterback."

Haddix passed for 1,875 yards and 13 touchdowns and also ran for 293 yards and eight TDs. Though he didn't throw all that often (171 attempts per game), he was effective, averaging 8.4 yards per attempt. His

HILLTOPPERS GLANCE

- 2003 record: 9-4
- Head coach: David Elson (9-4, second season)
- Assistants: Willie Taggart, Mike Dietzel, T. J. Weist, Walter Wells, Craig Aukerman, Mike Fanoga, Mike Chism, Stuart Holt, Steve Adams, Josh Gehring
- Starters returning: 5 offense, 4 defense
- Stadium: L.T. Smith Stadium (17,500)

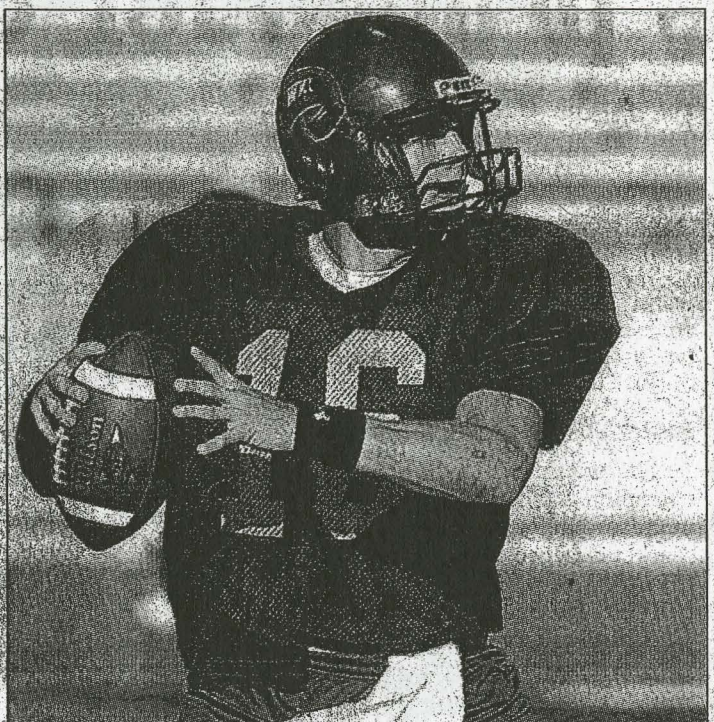
Schedule

Date	Opponent	Time
Sept. 4	at Kansas St.	2:00
Sept. 11	CONCORD (W. VA.)	8:00
Sept. 18	at Eastern Ky.	7:30
Sept. 25	at Florida Int.	6:00
Oct. 2	YOUNG TOWN ST.	7:30
Oct. 9	at Northern Iowa	5:00
Oct. 16	at Southern Ill.	7:00
Oct. 23	INDIANA ST.	5:00
Oct. 30	ILLINOIS ST.	8:00
Nov. 6	at SW Mo. St.	2:00
Nov. 13	WESTERN ILL.	5:00

All times p.m. and Eastern

ability to work the option game and throw deep for big yardage helped the Hilltoppers score 427 points.

"He handled everything well," Elson said. "Last year he was just trying to figure out what he was supposed to do. This year he's able to focus on



By Jim Roshan, Special to The Courier-Journal

Though quarterback Justin Haddix "still battles with trying to do too much," according to coach David Elson, he did plenty as a freshman last year, passing for 13 touchdowns and running for eight.

defenses. Things just clear up. They cleared for me after a year. We'll see some other things (from Haddix). He still battles with trying to do too much."

Haddix's best performance might have come in the 45-7 playoff victory over Jackson State, when he threw three scoring passes. But he also struggled at times. In a 33-28 loss at Western Illinois, the Hilltoppers built a 21-7 second-quarter lead but couldn't sustain their offense after that. They recovered four fumbles in the final quarter but converted them into only one touchdown.

The sophomore must improve his accuracy (50.7 percent) and keep his composure. The Hilltoppers' two regular-season losses against I-AA opponents were by a total of nine points. If they had won those games, they would have been host of a playoff game instead of going on the road.

Western was eliminated in a 34-17 second-round defeat to Wofford.

"The Southern Illinois loss

(28-24) and the one to Western Illinois were bad losses," Haddix said. "We have to take care of the ball and score points. I need to be more of a leader. Lerron and I are young, but we have to be leaders."

Haddix and Moore (1,490 rushing yards, 13 TDs) will carry the load perhaps even more than last year. With veterans Casey Rooney and Shannon Hayes gone, the wide receivers will be young.

And the defense, which has only four starters back, needs to get tougher. After a strong start last year, the unit wore down a bit, especially against the run.

Elson has addressed the problem by landing some more size for the line. Nose tackle Daniel Williams (6 feet 2, 265 pounds) helped Georgia Military College hold its junior-college opponents to just 74.7 yards rushing per game.

The schedule will do Western no favors. Five of the first seven games are on the road, against I-A power Kansas State, Eastern Kentucky, Florida International, Northern Iowa and Southern Illinois.

WKU Football

Porter making best of chance in spotlight

By ROB HERBST
The Daily News
rherbst@bgdailynews.com/783-3238

Western Kentucky running back Brian Porter has made sure not to fumble his opportunity.

With first- and second-team running backs Lerron Moore and G.J. Wooldridge on the sideline for a week with nagging injuries, Porter has made the leap from an unknown running back to a player getting first-team carries.

During the Hilltoppers' mini-scrimmage Thursday, Porter rushed for 52 yards on 12 carries and a 4-yard touchdown run.

"I believe we've found something in the misfortune of having Lerron and G.J. missing some time," WKU coach David Elson said. "Any time you're going against our first-team defense, which we think is pretty good, it's noteworthy."

Although Moore is the Hilltoppers' No. 1 running back after rushing for almost 1,500 yards, Elson said Porter has closed the gap on Wooldridge, who is nursing an ankle injury. Moore is out with a hamstring injury.

Before the summer began, Porter's name hadn't been mentioned as one of the Hilltoppers' top three running backs. But former third-string running back Tony West quit this summer, opening the first hole for Porter.

Moore and Wooldridge's time on the sidelines have opened up another.

"I'm trying to take full advantage of every moment I've got to get in," Porter said. "I just want to show the coaches that when people go down, I can be there."

At 5-foot-9, 180 pounds, Porter is smaller than both Moore (5-10, 210) and Wooldridge (5-11, 185), but Elson said he's strong enough to run inside.

"There was one run when it looked like he was stopped up but kept moving his feet," Elson said. "He looks like that smaller guy, but he really is a strong, pretty powerful runner. This experience is invaluable for him."

Porter is considered a sophomore, but is in his first year playing with the Hilltoppers. Because he didn't qualify academically, Porter couldn't practice or play last season.

His first official action with Western began when camp opened Aug. 9. And in that brief timespan, Porter has been noticed.

8/29/04

Thursday, August 19, 2004

Williams adapting

By ROB HERBST

The Daily News

rherbst@bkdailynews.com/783-3238

WKU Football

Defensive lineman Daniel Williams has dealt with plenty of change since arriving at Western Kentucky last winter.

Off the football field, Williams had to deal with the death of his father and a new environment. Before coming to WKU, Williams had a more structured environment at Georgia Military College.

On the football field, Williams has adapted to a changed body and position change. He estimates he weighed 230 pounds on his first day at WKU, but is now listed at 265 pounds. He was also a defensive end at Georgia Military, but is now playing nose tackle for the Hilltoppers.

But the changes haven't hampered him. The junior from Baxley, Ga., made an immediate impact during spring practice and has been tabbed as Western's first-string nose tackle during its preseason workouts this month.

"He's been one of the most positive additions we've made since I've been here," said WKU coach David Elson, who was a seven-year Western assistant, before taking the head coaching position last year. "He's fit in right away and is just a great kid to have on the team."

Williams originally attended Georgia Military with the intent of graduating to a I-A or I-AA football program. Those offers came last winter and he considered I-A schools Louisiana Tech and Louisville, plus Western and fellow I-AA program Appalachian State.

One factor in Western's favor was its defense. The Hilltoppers run a similar 3-4 defense that Georgia Military uses, so Williams wouldn't have to learn a new system.

"Since I didn't have to change my way of playing, it was all kind of easy for me," Williams said. "And playing here is like playing in the (Southeastern Conference) of I-AA. There's a lot of

good teams and competition."

Williams was familiar with Western's system, but not his position. Instead of being a not-so-large defensive end, the Hilltoppers wanted Williams to be an anchor at nose tackle.

Gaining extra weight wasn't a challenge. "I just ate at (Downing University Center) every day."

The shift on the defensive line was an adjustment.

"There's a lot more double teams," Williams said. "It's different, but I feel like I can play anywhere on the line. If they need me to play defensive end, I'll do it."

He has the ability to adjust because of his versatility. While he has gained weight and is one of Western's bigger defensive linemen over the past few years, he hasn't lost quickness.

The combination of size and speed has made him a challenge for Western's offensive linemen during camp this month.

"Our offensive linemen have brought it up to me that he's so quick," Elson

"He has really risen his stock and not just today," Elson said. "He's (been) tremendous in camp, in general. He's been one of the guys you'd call a surprise at camp that has got not just coaches, but players talking."

Since Porter was able to produce against Western's first-team defense Thursday, he feels capable of doing it against other I-AA foes during the regular season.

"If you can get positive yards on them, you can get positive yards on anybody," Porter said. "I came to camp wanting to make an impact and if somebody gets tired or injured, I want to be the man that they say, 'Porter, go in the game.'"

During Thursday's mini-scrimmage, the Hilltoppers ran nine drives and put together two touchdowns and a 30-yard Chris James field goal. WKU's defense held the Hilltoppers to four, three-

and-out results.

Quarterback Justin Haddix was 7-of-14 on the day for 100 yards and put together one touchdown march. Haddix's highlight was a 35-yard pass down the middle of the field to sophomore wide receiver Aaron Scott on a third-and-three.

Backup quarterback Blake Ladson was 5-of-8 for 43 yards and had the Hilltoppers' other score on a 2-yard touchdown run to the right corner of the end zone.

"It really looked like the defense had taken over and was dominating, then Scott stepped up and made that play," Elson said. "I thought both sides at times did what they needed to do today."

— Western will hold its first full scrimmage of camp at 1 p.m. Saturday.

to changes

said. "He's quick and powerful. He sustains himself in (the trenches)."

Not only can Williams' size and speed help himself, but his teammates as well.

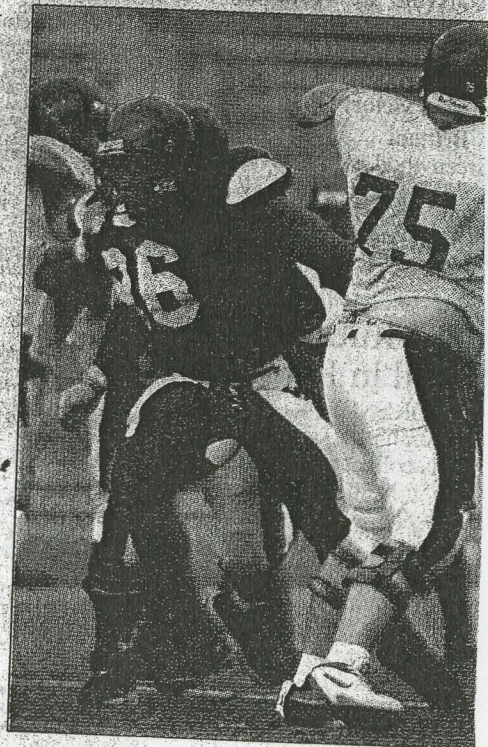
WKU senior linebacker Charles Thompson has traditionally been behind small defensive linemen, but relishes the opportunity to play behind Williams.

"Last year our defensive linemen were so undersized, but we still competed," Thompson said. "We were still one of the best defenses in the conference. (Being bigger on the defensive line) helps the linebackers move around pretty good and the holes can be bigger."

— Western's practice today will be highlighted by a situational scrimmage. The first full scrimmage of the preseason will be at 1 p.m. Saturday at L.T. Smith Stadium.

WKU defensive tackle Daniel Williams breaks through the offensive line during Tuesday's practice at L.T. Smith Stadium.

Clinton Lewis/Daily News



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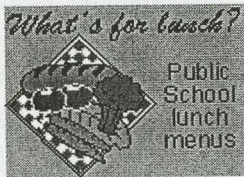
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Ladson filling role at WKU

By **GEORGE ROBINSON**
grobinson@kentuckynewera.com



BOWLING GREEN, Ky. -- You can't fault Blake Ladson for wanting to play.

The junior backup quarterback at Western Kentucky University joined the team last year after sitting out the 2002 national championship season as a transfer from West Virginia.

Last season, the former Hoptown quarterback found himself on the playing field five times finishing the season as the team's sixth leading rusher with 173 yards and scoring twice.

But for Ladson, those minutes seemed more to tantalize than satisfy.

"Honestly, I've been begging to play," Ladson said during Western's football media day last week at Smith Stadium. "I've been literally begging. I just want to contribute as much as I can. But maybe they're a little leary about it. As of right now they just want me in the backup spot."

You can't fault that, either.

With Ladson representing Justin Haddix's only experienced backup, head coach David Elon feels completely secure in the knowledge that Ladson is capable of leading one of the Gateway Conference's most productive offenses.

Ladson's backup role has become as sacred as the 2002 championship rings worn by the upperclassmen.

"It's just in case," Ladson said. "They don't want to take any chances."

Ladson's first reaction to not getting the chance to play in different positions was to sulk, but he quickly realized his importance as a role player, instead of trying to become the star.

"As practice went on, it made more sense to me," he said. "I've seen other guys go down and sometimes nobody is there to fill in the way it should be. So it makes sense to always have a good backup plan."

Ladson will see playing time this year. That's a given. How much will be determined not only by the health of Haddix but also the margin of the Hilltoppers' leads in any given game.

Elon has already stressed the need for his team to find competitiveness on the practice field.

"We have competition at almost every position this year," Elon said. "And I think the younger guys have gotten the attention of the older guys."

At the center of that competitive spirit is Ladson and Haddix.

Both quarterbacks have been pushing each other during summer practice, keeping a running tally of every possible statistic for a QB.

"Right now, I'm on top," Ladson said. "And I want to keep it that way. But we're great friends on and off the field and that's important."

George Robinson can be reached by telephone at 887-3261 or by e-mail at grobinson@kentuckynewera.com.

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Football

YOUR news source for Tuesday, August 17, 2004

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...the first time, Landon said. "They don't want to let me go."

...first time, Landon said. "They don't want to let me go."

...first time, Landon said. "They don't want to let me go."

Landon filling role as a role player

By GEORGE ROBINSON
grobinsch@kentuckynews.com

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — You can't fault Landon

Landon will see playing time this year. That's a given. How much will be determined by the health of the starters. Landon, a junior, is sitting out the 2003 and 2002 seasons as a transfer from West Virginia.

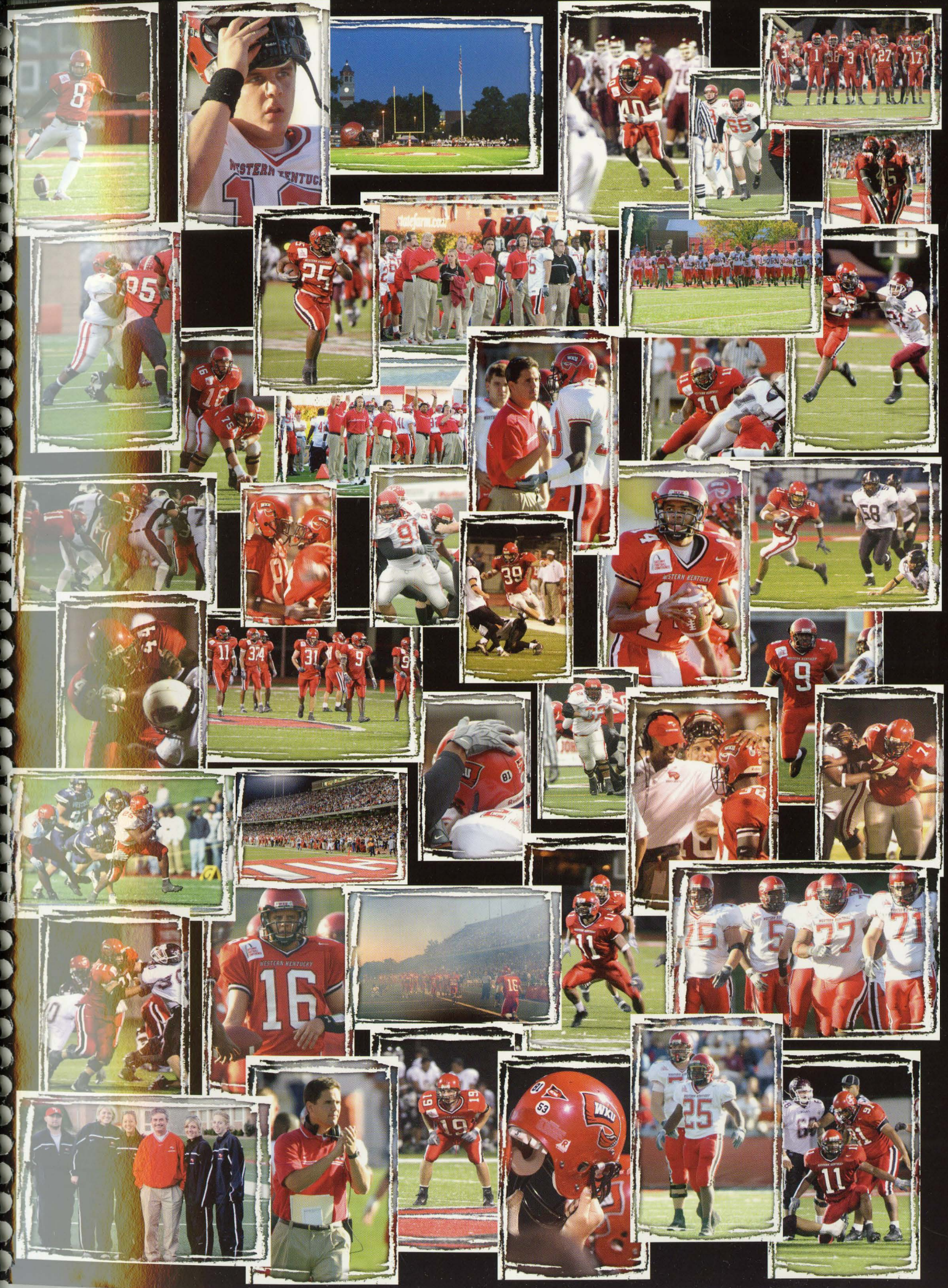
Last season, the former All-American found himself on the bench. "We have competition," Landon said. "Add I think I'm a better player than the other guys."

At the center of that competitive spirit is Landon and Hader.

Both quarterbacks have been playing since their freshman year. Landon said he's "ready to go" and Hader said he's "ready to go."

George Robinson can be reached by telephone at 888-232-1111 or by e-mail at grobinsch@kentuckynews.com.

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2004 HILLTOPPER SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME
09/04	at Kansas State	6:10 pm
09/11	CONCORD (W.VA)	7:00 pm
09/18	at Eastern Kentucky (GTV)	6:30 pm
09/25	at Florida International	5:00 pm
10/02	YOUNGSTOWN STATE* (GTV) (Parents Weekend/ Focus on Western)	6:30 pm
10/09	at Northern Iowa*	4:05 pm
10/16	at Southern Illinois*	6:00 pm
10/23	INDIANA STATE* (Homecoming)	4:00 pm
10/30	ILLINOIS STATE* (Harvest Fest)	7:00 pm
11/06	at Southwest Missouri State*	1:00 pm
11/13	WESTERN ILLINOIS* (Corvette Raffle)	4:00 pm
11/27	NCAA I-AA Playoffs First Round	tba
12/04	NCAA I-AA Playoffs Quarterfinal	tba
12/11	NCAA I-AA Playoffs Semifinals	tba
12/17	NCAA I-AA Championship (fri)	tba

*denotes Gateway Football Conference game

(GTV) denotes game that will appear on the Gateway Television package

Home games boldface type

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Home games played at L.T. Smith Stadium/Jimmy Feix Field